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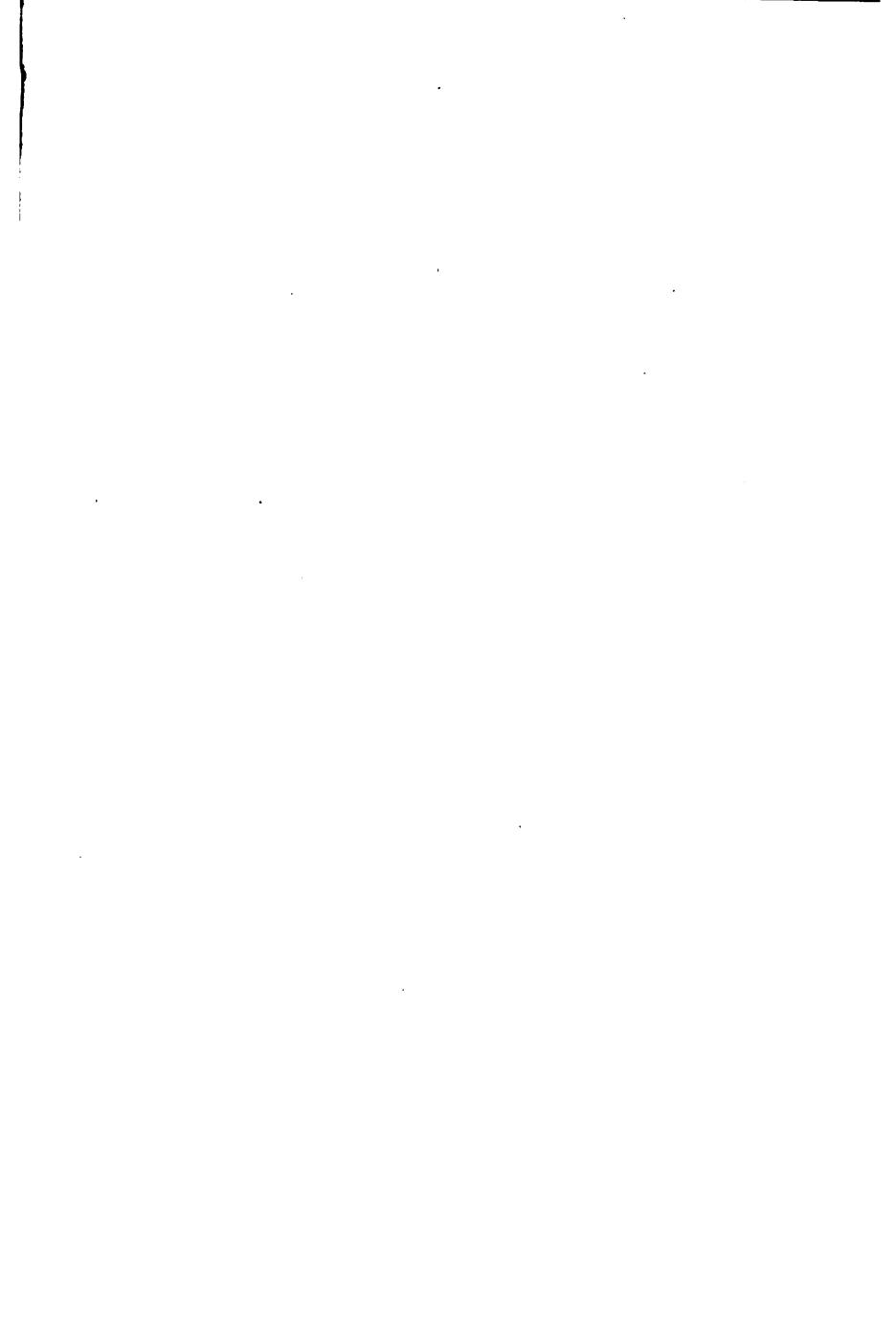
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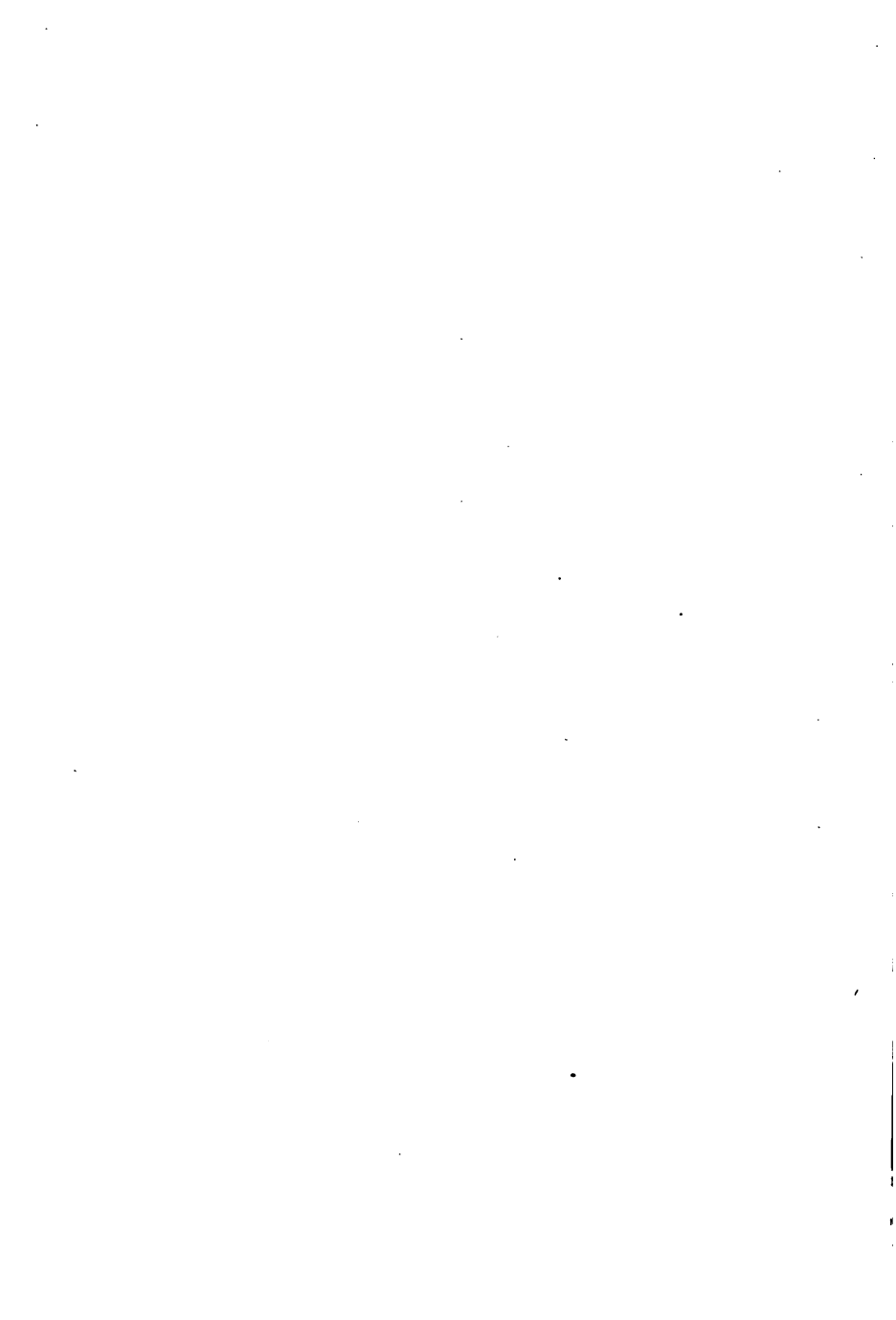
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THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

ON

PURELY LOGICAL PRINCIPLES.

Joseph B. BY
REV. J. B. GROSS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HEATHEN RELIGION IN ITS POPULAR AND SYMBOLICAL DEVELOPMENT;" OF "THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, AS SET FORTH IN THE BOOK OF CONCORD, CRITICALLY EXAMINED AND ITS FALLACY DEMONSTRATED;" OF "THE TEACHINGS OF PROVIDENCE, OR NEW LESSONS ON OLD SUBJECTS;" OF "THE PARSON ON DANCING, AS IT IS TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE, AND WAS PRACTICED AMONG THE ANCIENT GREEKS AND ROMANS;" OF "THOUGHTS FOR THE FIRESIDE AND THE SCHOOL;" OF "THOUGHTS FOR THE FIRESIDE AND THE SCHOOL, SECOND SERIES;" OF "OLD FAITH AND NEW THOUGHTS," &c., &c.

"If a man die, shall he live again?"—Job, xiv. 14.

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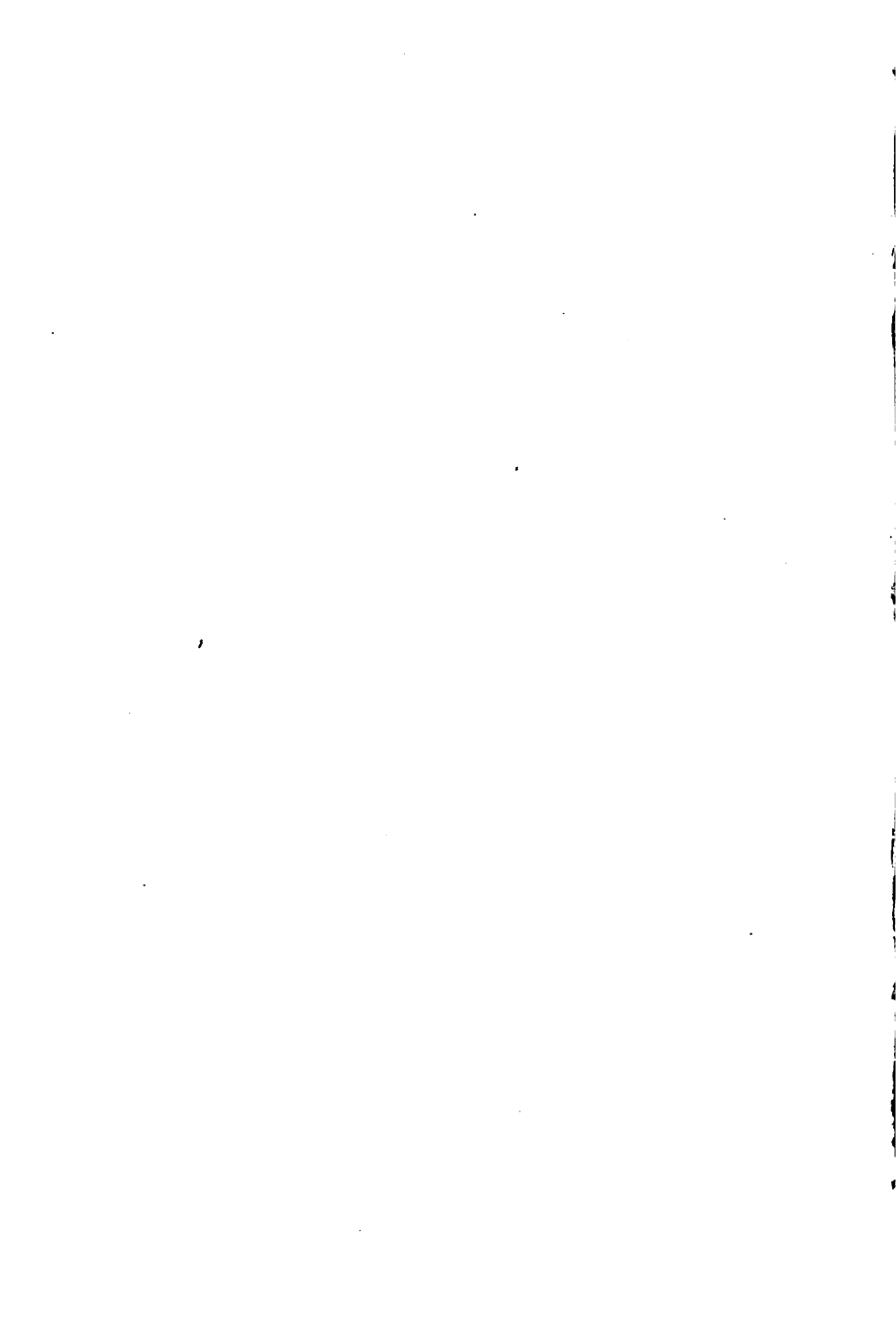
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DEDICATION.

IF there are any persons, who take a profound interest in a future life, and are willing to allow some weight to purely logical arguments in proof of it; if, again, there are any persons, whose souls cannot contemplate the dread idea of annihilation without a shudder; and if, finally, there are any persons, who consider that—by its inherent capacities, the human mind is not only competent to attain, more or less clearly, to the conception and belief of a future life, but that the history of all barbarous and civilized peoples, proves that *heathens* are, by no means, left a prey to doubts and anxieties on a subject of paramount importance to the enjoyment of a tranquil and happy life, *to them*, the following pages are respectfully inscribed by their friend,

THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

ACCORDING to orthodox creeds and a commonly entertained prejudice, the vastly greater part of mankind, have never been blessed with what is technically termed a *Revelation*, and it is, hence, generally believed that the heathens: the peoples who are unprovided with a supernatural revelation, can know nothing that is reliable of a future life, and that, accordingly, they must either pine in dreary hopelessness, or fret in blank despair! Such—I am bold to say, is far from being the case. For the heathens possess a source of knowledge inherent in human nature, which—in a manner similar to the revelation claimed for the Bible, is designed at once to guide our present, and to foreshadow: if not actually demonstrate, our future life.

It would not only be exceedingly strange, but appear as an irreconcilable trait in the Divine character, if the Creator had doomed innumer-

able multitudes of heathens—all too his children, to grovel in the dark on this subject so pre-eminently essential to the fundamental conditions of a consistent and harmonious human destiny, and left at last to die, like the beasts, without aspiration or fond expectation of a continuous conscious existence beyond the grave! No, no; instead of so disheartening and appalling a fate, the heathen, though not supernaturally taught, yet has a comfortable hope: anticipating a higher destiny and an ever progressive life! How far I shall be able to verify and illustrate this view of the subject—at once so gratifying and encouraging, the sequel must show, when ample proof will be adduced that God—in the sensible language of the Apostle, is the God “also of the Gentiles,” not only caring for them generally, but vouchsafing to impart to their souls that child-like trust, which can be derived only from a greater or less certainty of a predestination to an heirship of everlasting life!

In the 2 Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, the apostle writes that Christ “hath brought life and immortality to light”: an assertion which—taken literally, seems to imply that mankind—without Gospel-influences, cannot acquire a proper idea

of a future life. If such is the meaning, it is clearly and emphatically erroneous. I will charitably assume, therefore, that the sacred writer simply means to exalt the merits of the Savior in behoof of this important doctrine, and thus to postulate the greater certainty and, therefore, the greater cogency of his mode of inculcating the belief in a future life, compared with that which grounds the belief in immortality on purely logical inferences, or on principles, which are the natural and unaided outgrowths of the soul!

WILKES-BARRE, PA., October, 1881.



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THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY ON PURELY LOGICAL PRINCIPLES.

CHAPTER I.

The Dread of Annihilation among Mankind is Instinctive,
and, hence, Foreshadowing of a Future Life.

OUR existence and activity, as organized beings, are possible only as long as we live. As soon, therefore, as life becomes extinct, we cease—as far as may be judged from appearances, to possess the proper characteristics of humanity; for the bodily remains at death, are but its insignia or habiliments, which speedily undergo decomposition, and are resolved into their primordial elements, building up new structures, and becoming the basis, at once, of new organisms and of new functions.

Such being decidedly the case, and death—seemingly at least, putting an end to our exist-

ence, considered as implying conscious, rational beings, it is no wonder: knowing how dear life is, that death should naturally—except perhaps among the rudest class of savages, be contemplated with deep and abiding aversion, nay, even horror, as the forerunner of annihilation, or, at least, as an event accompanied by grievous doubts and misgivings. That life, under such repellent circumstances, should be clung to with eager tenacity, is not surprising, on the contrary, it would be surprising indeed, if such was not the case, at least among a great part of mankind, distinguished for sober and reflecting casts of mind.

Life is *proverbially* eminently sweet and precious, as it is the absolute condition under which all that is valuable or agreeable on earth, can be attained. Deprived of it, we are no longer—at least as far as can be judged of us as terrestrial phenomena or entities, in the category of percipient, sentient, and rational beings, and the varied drama of earth is, therefore, for ever closed to us! It is true, the suicide anticipates the inevitable dissolution which awaits him, but it is not always, probably seldom, that in laying violent hands on himself, he aims to hasten his

admission either to future life, or future enjoyment. On the contrary, it is to be presumed on well-established experimental grounds, that the majority of suicides are the consequence of melancholy, insanity, or other morbid and abnormal state of the mind. A fact, which should induce people to judge leniently—instead of harshly, as is usually the case, of such unhappy beings, whose nature we share, and who: sooner or later, may be overtaken by a similar calamity!

The opinion, expressed above, that man in his rudest state of development, is not likely to have any fear of death, or dread of annihilation, is based upon the grossly sensuous and groveling state of infant man, when he seldom feels regret for the past or anxiety for the future: he is yet too much of the earth, and, therefore, *earthly*, to think much or at all, of a future life. The questions, engaging the attention of the philosopher, whence am I? and whither am I going? never disturb or enlighten his embryo-intellect: he is satisfied, and, hence, not feeling any wants, craves no supply. God—having thus adapted his providential care to circumstances, his wisdom and goodness are amply

justified by the event: *milk* suffices babes; adults need *meat*!

The thought—naturally intruding itself in the course of this disquisition, is that though the “lower animals,” seem to be destined only for the present world, and to be consequently insensible of the existence of a future state of being, yet that—in case man is not to live hereafter, their fate is far more enviable than his: they live contentedly and die without apprehension that death is a deprivation of life, or that annihilation may await them, while man is doomed to manifold trials and tribulations in the present life, and, at last, goes down to the grave *mourning*, if no glimpse of hope illumines or comforts his soul. Yea, I hold that of all creatures, man—dying without a reasonable anticipation, a well-founded hope, or—at least, a strong probability of a life to come, is the most miserable and the most pitiable!

This deeply rooted antipathy to the idea of annihilation, is a marked concomitant of our race and, of course, implanted in the human breast by the Creator himself, for wise and beneficent purposes. One may be to guard against too great an indifference to health and life, and,

consequently, prompt an increased attention to self-preservation as well as physical and mental wellbeing. But the salient object of this feeling seems, doubtless, to be not only anticipative but indicative, of the realization of a future life: what it urges us to seek, it is reasonable to think we shall attain, and not be abandoned to a dreaded and hateful reverse. Finally, let me add, that he is truly happy who can sincerely exclaim with the poet:

“For me—I hold no commerce with despair!”

—DAWES' *Geraldine*.

CHAPTER II.

The Tender Relations, existing among Men, seem to warrant the Prognostication of a Future Life, and a Reunion of Friends.

THERE are relations in human life, which are more to be desired than even life itself—the relations of kindreds and friends. Every other social good, compared with them, appears to be mean or worthless. They—in fact, make earth an Eden, and the crosses of life bearable. It is, therefore, a pity, a shame, nay, often too a heinous sin, that these grand and precious relations: affording so many advantages for intellectual and moral improvement, are not always preserved inviolate. But it is well to bear in mind, that while the infraction of them is exceptional, their design is always noble, and their excellence remains unimpaired: “To err, is human!”

I shall first call attention to the relation of kindred, or the connection of mankind by the ties of birth and affinity.—The situation of man in this happy position, is of *correlative* import,

embracing, for example, husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, together with the kinsfolk, more or less affiliated to the family-institution. It is within this hallowed circle; this magic center of attraction between the different members, claiming a common consanguinity, where many of the most tender and affectionate emotions are fostered; where humanity—in its most lovely and winning traits, displays its greatest charms, and is likely to be most indefatigable in raising itself to a higher plane of its destiny; where instances of self-denial are most frequent; where acts of mutual good will and a generous forbearance are oftenest practiced; and where—in short, the conveniences and pleasures of life, thus benignly prepared for us, and having their perennial source in the broad sympathy of a common *kinship*, are usually found to abound most as well as to endure longest.

Let us expatiate a little further upon this fertile and interesting theme. Wife, husband, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, nay, uncle too, and aunt, and cousin, &c.—close household-fraternizations, often extending widely in their ramifications, what charming and sig-

nificant appellations; what fond, yes, thrice beatific reminiscences do they call to mind; what sacred duties; what holy joys, do they imply; to what lovely, cheerful scenes and incidents, do family-gatherings and festive entertainment give rise, within the limits of these important and divinely ordained correlations of society; the incense too of pious hearts, ascending thence from the hallowed family-altar, denotes and inflames a common devotion, while the emphatic hearth-fires, fed by mutual diligence, warm, and sooth, and exalt the domestic affections!

And now to think, that all this rare and abundant provision for a more speedy and effectual development of mankind: this potent family-nucleus, from which the dawn of civilization radiates, and through which humanity is bound in a closer and more intimate union, should for ever vanish out of sight at death, and all the signal instances of endearment and-works of love, peculiar to the domestic institution both in its incipient and maturer stage of growth, should, therefore, have been predestined not to survive the present life, during the flush and buoyancy of which, they constituted the pride and glory of man, and there be thus finally an

end of both, surpasses comprehension, and—unless it is taken for granted that God can do any thing in vain, must be repudiated both by the canons of logic and the dictates of common sense!

Finally, I am aware—it may be observed here, that according to New-Testament teaching, the family-institution is not to survive its present, peculiar adaptation to the wants of human society, but it is hard, nay, impossible to suppose that God would introduce us to the most lovely and interesting phase of humanity, and thus open a source of happiness unequalled anywhere else in the social relation, without destituting us to the enjoyment of at least *similar* and *compensative* blessings, in a future world. It would be—it seems, positively cruel—to speak, as St. Paul writes, “after the manner of man,” in God, to open such an exuberant fountain of wellbeing in this life, merely to tantalize us in view of another! But as certainly as God is wise and good, so certainly he cannot—the conclusion seems irresistible, to finite and, be sure, erring man, give a foretaste of a fruition which he does not intend that we should realize!

Treating of *friends*, in the next place, it is well

to bear in mind, that I mean by friends, intelligent and virtuous people, whose sentiments are congenial to our own, and whose society we, therefore, crave. Friends, in short, who sympathize with whatever is good and praiseworthy, and are, hence, prompt in furthering every noble aspiration of humanity! It is clear that in the society of such choice representatives of our race, it must be pleasant, profitable, honorable, ay, unalloyed happiness, to have intimate communion. For our souls being congenial, and our thoughts and habits of life, similar, we are, hence, governed by the same exalted and useful principles, and, consequently, mutually thank God: "from whom is every good and perfect gift," that we have found homogeneous souls; that the sphere of our virtuous pleasures is, of course, greatly enlarged; and our growth in the direction of a true destiny of man, vastly facilitated.

Such being the case, it evidently follows that—if there is no hereafter, this glorious friendship is delusive; a "false pretense"; a *seeming* only; or—in other words, a promise without fulfillment! Can *God* so trifle with the feelings and instinctive predilections of his children? Can

he say *yea*, when he means *nay*? If—under the circumstances, such a contradiction is to be deemed impossible, it is also to be deemed impossible that the grave should close our career, and, at the same time, terminate all our most pleasant and hopeful surroundings. Is not God our father, but a father: a Divine father at least, cannot now indorse or commend gifts as eligible and precious, and, by-and-by, without apparent reason, consign them to oblivion. No, *he*, at least, does not deal in shams, which raise expectations but to disappoint them. Hence I infer that our faith in a future life, is amply justified on simply rational principles, and should, therefore, content us!

Whether the English poet includes kinship among the friendship of which he speaks below, is not quite clear: the probability is that he limits the term to no relation or condition in society. His rhythm, which moves smoothly, and his sentiments, which are noble, are thus expressed in the following couplet:

“Friendship above all ties does bind the heart,
And faith in friendship is the noblest part.”

LORD ORRERY.

CHAPTER III.

Can God do any Thing in Vain ? Or, how can the Death of the Greater Part of Mankind be explained ?—Death in Fetal Life ; in Early Life ; in Mature Life.

Death in Fetal Life.—It is notorious that death in the period of fetal life, is astonishingly frequent. Myriad lives are annually lost in this incipient stage of human existence, the bearers of which, therefore, never see the light of day. And this strange and—to all appearance, premature mortality, happens very often quite independently of the vile and wicked arts, which are largely employed to procure abortion, either with the view of getting rid of the care and expense of raising a family, or of effacing the evidence of a criminal and disgraceful commerce. For the virtuous and God-fearing parents, who esteem matrimony a Divine institution, and the family cares a pleasure as well as a solemn duty, are, alas, likewise doomed to experience a similar fatality in their nascent offspring, in spite of

every precaution, which prudence makes necessary, or philoprogenitiveness dictates.

It is hence evident that at least in all those cases of fetal mortality, which are not the result of willful interference with the sacred and appropriate offices of maternity, means are employed by the Creator for the attainment of ends, which—as far as we can judge, are never realized in this world, and labor expended, which is not adequate to its intended results. These are weighty facts, full of abstruse problems, and there is only one way of explaining them without implicating the wisdom of God: it is to own our incapacity to comprehend and properly to appreciate the nature and end of the seeming mystery. For God—it is certain, cannot: as an infinitely wise and, therefore, unerring being, do anything in vain, and, consequently, fetal mortality cannot be proof of vain labor, or, in other words, of a frustration of the Divine purpose. This purpose—underlying a phenomenon apparently so very faulty and strikingly indicative of a failure in design, is the provision—I doubt not, of a future life, and the introduction into it of the incipient humanities, whose untimely death has been the subject of this paragraph.

If hence, I again observe, there is no future life, and, of course, no admission of the fetal decedents into a future life, then it inevitably follows that much labor has been bestowed in vain, and that between the Creator's plans and means, there is a sad, a woeful discrepancy! I cannot see the necessity of resorting to so desperate an alternative in the question at issue, and, hence, I am willing to believe, at least to *hope*, that this seeming enigma in human destiny, will, sooner or later, find its solution in a grand, concordant, and all-reconciling hereafter!

Death in Early Life.—Under this heading, are comprised that part of mankind, which is embraced between the eras of birth and adult age. Within these limits, which—though ample, are yet clearly defined, the human organism is more thoroughly developed, while the relations of life are more diversified and endearing, than in the fetal period of existence. In this wombal stage, nascent humanity is dumb; the sweet embraces of father and mother are unknown to it; thought is not yet evoked; and unconsciousness still presides over a mass of animated matter, notwithstanding that it is most exquisitely moulded and *anticipatively* marvelously endowed by the Crea-

tor. How different from the human being in early life, whose senses are active; his brain reflecting; his heart sensitive to kind or harsh impressions; his tastes for the amenities around him, marked; his social relations complicated and arduous, with hopes and fears alternately predominating!

This interesting period of life, may aptly be defined as the period of hope, joy, preparation, and the first fruits of a riper and more prolific age. Here too, the blossoms of beauty freely expand and flourish; the muscles become brawny; the nerves toned as well as nicely sensitive; and reason—keenly conscious of superiority, gradually assumes the ascendant. Who has conferred all these excellencies upon man; given rise to all these charms of life; to all these distinguished prerogatives in human destiny? Nay, who has thus not only made man great and splendid, but his mission weighty, and enviable, and glorious; as well as his rank and significance in animated nature, pre-eminent? God. And yet after all this vast outlay of painstaking in behoof of man, this highest-rank specimen of sentient creation on earth; this *image of God*, must already die in this early stage of his being, still in a course

of development, or just maturing! Alas, such is man's fate here below!

Is this then the whole of man? Man wrought with so much admirable care, and placed in an abode teeming with Eden-scenes; qualified for high enjoyment; and capable of generous and noble deeds? What, to think, that God would place man here within surroundings so lovely in attractions; so prolific in sources of pleasure; so captivating and—properly used, so sufficing; and then—at last, consign him to oblivion? Surely if God is good, and that he is good there can be no doubt, it cannot be; nay, it will not be!

I shall here subjoin a concise notice of the mortality, incident to the different periods of human life: showing how brief is our earthly sojourn, from Richerand's "*Elements of Physiology*": a communication, though not quite recent, it may, nevertheless, be deemed substantially applicable to the present bills of mortality.

"Man," writes the Professor, "dies at all ages; and if the duration of his life surpasses that of the lower animals, the great number of diseases to which he is liable, renders it much

more uncertain, and is the cause why a much smaller number arrive at the natural term of existence. It has been attempted to discover what are the probabilities of life, that is, to ascertain, from observation, how long a man may expect to live, who has already reached a determinate age. From late accurate observations of the ages at which a number of persons have died, and from a comparison of the deaths with the births, it has been ascertained, that about one fourth of the children that are born, die within the first eleven months of life; one third before twenty-three months; and one half before they reach the eighth year. Two thirds of mankind die before the thirty-ninth year, and three fourths before the fifty-first; so that, as Buffon observes, of nine children that are born, only one arrives at the age of seventy-three; of thirty, only one lives to the age of eighty; while out of two hundred and ninety-one, only one lives to the age of ninety; and in the last place, out of eleven thousand nine hundred and ninety-six, only one drags on a languid existence to the age of a hundred years."

Death in Mature Life.—Man in mature life is not exempt from the infliction of death, though

he may neither suffer decay nor prostration from superannuation, and when, therefore, he is still in the possession of unimpaired vigor of mind and body; when he is eminently capable of further research and self-amelioration; when his fellow-beings continue to do homage to his worth, and recognize in him a person amply fitted to guide mankind in the paths of wisdom and usefulness.

The man thus concisely delineated, is satisfied with his situation; with his fortune; with his opportunities of improvement, and a deeper penetration into the phenomena and laws of nature. He craves no change. Why should he? He does not ask for health, he has it already; not for wealth, he is satisfied; not for the esteem of mankind, he enjoys it abundantly; not for a fairer sky, he finds and adores God in the impending heavens; not—finally, for serenity of soul, he *is* happy!

Why, let me ask, should a man, though advanced in life, but still young in purpose and hale in vigor; buoyant in hope; resolute in energy; in his ardor to serve his Maker, indefatigable; and in the discharge of all his duties prompt and faithful, be smitten with death?

To hurry away a man, thus *sufficed*, by death, seems like a ruthless intrusion into his happiness; a cruel disturbance of his peace; a needless deprivation of blessings, keenly enjoyed and wisely used! Such a deplorable fatality can be accounted for only on the supposition, that the sage thus snatched from his earthly Paradise, is heir to a Paradise in a world to come: this thought alone can justify so untimely and sinister a fate, and “vindicate the ways of God to man”!

CHAPTER IV.

A Future Life, inferred from Analogies in the Present.

IN treating this subject, I shall simply aim to set in its proper light the correspondence which exists between desire and gratification, or—in other words, between our endowments and the provision which is made by the Creator, for their proper exercise or indulgence, and after that, briefly point out the analogy which is observed between this arrangement and our aspirations after a future life.

In accomplishing this task, I shall mainly avail myself of the aid, which phrenology affords on this interesting subject, though that science is not devoted to a solution, or even a notice, of the present question. Its concordance with the subject treated here, is merely accidental, not the result of design: its teaching is available to the object of this article, and, therefore, it is thankfully recognized, without, however, positively indorsing the theory of its *bumps*!

Amativeness—one of the animal propensities in man, is necessary to the perpetuation of the race, and, therefore: on the principle above laid down, provision is made for its indulgence—the sexes exist!—Again, philoprogenitiveness being given, it can be *satisfied* only in offspring. Adhesiveness, once existing, must be gratified, and, hence, needs country and friends for its exercise; on the other hand, combativeness finds its solution in the removal of physical and moral obstacles, which, to be removed, must, of course, exist; while destructiveness can be indulged only in the use of animals for food, and, hence, the necessity of animated nature as the appropriate correlation. Moreover, possessing the gift of constructiveness, its objective significance is seen, according to Webster, in “the formation of parts into a whole”; acquisitiveness covets property, and, behold, the means to acquire it, are at once various and ample; secretiveness too is a part of our natural endowments, and—enjoining secrecy, we can readily comply with the injunction: God having given us one gift, also gives us the other. First, there is the desire, and next, the indulgence. The one being given, the other follows as the inference from the prem-

ises. Finally, self-esteem, or love of approbation, and cautiousness, or "the quality of being cautious"—both endowments, and classed, phrenologically, among the propensities, are susceptible of similar elucidation; that is, the propensity of either existing, it is sure to be indulged or gratified; for when God bestows a power, he also provides for its exercise, and, hence, when he inspires hopes, it may be reasonably supposed that he will fulfill them!

The faculties, comprising the moral sentiments, will next receive a brief attention.—Benevolence: the faculty first to be noticed, implies good will, or the disposition to do good. How manifold the occasions are for the exercise of this God-like virtue, it needs no prolix disquisition to illustrate. God says "be kind, be good," and everywhere there is room for a compliance with the behest. Veneration is another faculty, classed under this head, and its object is the recognition and worship of God. Behold, it is given, and God too is *given*, to employ and gratify it! Again, hope, or confidence in a future event, has its correlate in its appropriate realization: for as a faculty, it implies eventual possession. Here naturally follows ideality, or

the love of the beautiful, the refined, the excellent, in nature and art, and is abundantly gratified in the contemplation of the grandeur and loveliness, witnessed in the various works and providences of the Creator. Next, wonder and consciousness require a concise notice. Of the former, Combe writes, "It prompts us to admiration, and desires something new," &c. Hence, there is plenty to admire, and the desire of something new, is sufficiently often gratified, to show the correspondence between the capacity and the enjoyment; nay, the certain indulgence of an innate soul-yearning! As to conscientiousness, it signifies—according to Webster, "A scrupulous regard to the decisions of conscience; a sense of justice, a strict conformity to its dictates": it has, accordingly, its correlate and solution, in conscientiousness. Finally, a word about firmness and imitation, the last faculties, mentioned under the category of the moral sentiments. Of the former, Combe writes, "The other faculties of the mind are its objects. It supports and maintains their activity, and gives determination to our purposes." Of course, its functions are contingent on the existence of the objects upon which they are to be exercised,

and without them they would be at once vain and unintelligible. As to the faculty of imitation, it is clear that if its office consists in the imitation of the actions and appearances of beings and things, these objects must exist, and that it is because they exist, that this faculty has its origin. Thus, then, the theory of correlation is, I conceive, not visionary, but a fact, which must be patent to every one, possessing ordinary intelligence !

Instances of capacities and their objective tendencies, might be readily multiplied, but the preceding details may suffice to vindicate and inculcate the theory, that endowment and function, or instinct and enjoyment, go hand in hand, or—in other words, are reciprocal: the one premising and inaugurating the other.

Now, why should the foregoing disquisition, founded on daily experience, not suffice to justify a belief in a future life; for to yearn for it, is as much a natural instinct as it is to hunger and thirst, and as these cravings of nature are satisfied, why should this ineradicable longing for a life to come, not find its solution in gratification? All the human instincts, indicative of an invincible tendency towards a higher life, or,

at least, of a continuation of life beyond the grave, are so many witnesses in behoof of our survival: in a conscious, personal existence, in death. That man—in his normal state, anticipates a future life, is because God has so endowed him; is because it is strictly accordant with the wants, and interests, and happiness of humanity. When we hope in a hereafter, it is virtually God, who says, “Hope in a hereafter,” and should he not enable us to realize this God-given hope? In short, it is to be presumed that if, for example, the love of offspring, is not disappointed, neither can the love of immortality be disappointed; for both are gifts equally derived from God!

Finally, with such evidence in support of the doctrine of a future life, it is—of course, impossible to share the cool apathy, expressed in the following Shakespearean stanza:

“ We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.”

CHAPTER V.

The Apparent Occasional Suspensions of Rewards and Punishments in the Present Life, seem to warrant the Inference that there will be Adequate Recompense hereafter, and that, therefore, there will be a Future Life.

It is time to understand, it seems, that the rewards and punishments, mentioned in the Bible, are not strictly *simply* of a moral nature and tendency, but rather of a municipal and arbitrary character, and are, therefore, to be judged in the light of the retribution peculiar to the administration of justice in civil governments. Such crude, irrelevant, and eminently unworthy ideas, attributed to God's judicial methods, are significant of a mode of thinking, common to vulgar minds, and to entertain them any longer, must consequently prove highly injurious to the progress and happiness of the human race. From such fallacious and contemptible conceptions of the true nature and end of a rational and wholesome kind of jurisprudence, have arisen the opinions—often fancies, of *heaven and hell*, the

one the charming abode of the good, or—may be, simply the elect, and the other the hideous receptacle of the bad, or reprobate; the former implying the final reward, the latter the final punishment of retributive justice, and both denoting—not the natural result or working of the principles of the moral law, but the effect and evidence of a decision, founded sometimes on caprice, often on partiality or antipathy!

Rewards and punishments: to be adapted to the true amelioration or benefit of mankind, and thus be grounded in the psychical nature and needs of man, must be of a pre-eminently and exclusively *moral* character; for the human mind has its own appropriate and inalienable tribunal: before it all must ultimately bow, and whence, hence, a final judgment is pronounced in favor or in condemnation of the free-agent, who is the object of this searching juridical dispensation, which—though it may be tardy or conniving for a season, it never fails in the vindication of justice, while its sentence is as infallible as it is impartial and inevitable.

The rewards and punishments, administered in municipal society, are, no doubt, instrumental, more or less, in the furtherance of the proper

training and the development of conscience, but their action is only indirect in its moral effects, while their aim is *primarily* political and, therefore, confined within narrower limits than is the case with the retributive functions, inherent in our sense, or—rather, judgment, of right and wrong. The soul—it should be carefully borne in mind, embraces a world that is eminently its own, and the weighty affairs of this world, can be satisfactorily administered only on purely moral principles, and for rigidly and solely moral ends. A human judge may sentence to the gallows or to the State-prison, but he cannot, in popular parlance, sentence to *hell*, nor can secular distinctions or flatteries secure an entrance into *heaven*, to the favorite; for—in either case, conscience is the final arbitrator: its verdict is decisive, and untrammelled by political precedents!

To adduce still further evidence that conscience alone possesses the power to educe the spiritual states, commonly known as heaven and hell, or future happiness and misery, I shall add to the teachings, laid down in the foregoing paragraphs, the decidedly common-sense doctrine, advanced by St. Paul, on this emphatically paramount sub-

ject, and recorded in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, of the second chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, where this most zealous gentile apostle predicates the following thesis of the moral functions of the soul, as exemplified—for instance, among the heathens; a thesis, which may fearlessly appeal to the intelligence of the present age, for its undoubted correctness, as well as its incomparable worth, in moral training. “When,” he writes, “the gentiles, which have not the law,* do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law, written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another.”

In this pithy quotation, the doctrine is clearly and forcibly taught, that reward and punishment—to be ameliorative: normally soul-developing, and, hence, facilitating of true moral growth, must have a conscience-basis, whose retribution is, therefore, internal, and is, consequently, not dependent for its proper execution, or complete realization, on outward contingencies or acci-

* The Mosaic law, or the civil code of the Jews.

dents—on a *hades* or an *elysium*; for its fruitions may abound on the rack, in the dungeon, or in the fires of *Smithfield*, while its torments may be present in the palace, on the throne, or in the bridal chamber: all is well, if it is well within, or as *Crabbe* sings in hymnic strains, fraught with hallowed truth and timely warning:

“Oh conscience! conscience! man’s most faithful friend,
Him canst thou comfort, ease, relieve, defend;
But if he will thy friendly checks forego,
Thou art, oh, woe for me! his deadliest foe!”

It is, no doubt, often the case that God exercises moral discipline over persons, unperceived, nay, unsuspected, by the majority of their fellow-beings. How many may be made wretched by the rebukes of conscience, charging their guilty souls with neglect of duty; violation of law; waste of talents, God often only knows. What sleepless nights; what humiliation; what mortification, &c., may not be owing to the retaliation of an injured, bleeding conscience! The same remark holds good conversely of many of the seemingly neglected; the despised; the abused, &c. Unseen by mortal eye, they are owned and blessed by God; and are, hence, glad

and contented in the hallowed sense of conscious rectitude: they are virtually in heaven, though in the midst of evil influences!

Though the retributive justice, emanating from the decisions of the moral sentiments, or—figuratively speaking, the tribunal of conscience, is not always asleep, however its presence may be overlooked or misconstrued, it is, nevertheless, patent that—"reasoning from what we know," sin frequently goes unpunished, and godliness unrewarded; that vice revels in luxury, while virtue pines in want. There is, in fact, often an evident disharmony between the lives and the fortunes of many persons, which seems to imply an inadequate or partial administration of the moral code, thus making it incompatible both with our sense of the Divine justice, and the moral principles and expectations of mankind. Such being the case, it calls loudly for rectification, which—as this is impossible: at least does not appear to be practicable, in the present order of things, it is at once natural and reasonable to suppose, that it will be attainable under more genial circumstances, and to be, therefore, deferred to a future life, and more happy auspices.

Such improved; such universality of justice, allowing no exception, and given no occasion for impious cavil, it is—it must be conceded by every reflecting mind, but natural to expect of a just and holy God, whom we adore as the common father of all. Indeed, according to the moral nature of man: the work of his hands, he is *self*-necessitated to govern man in accordance with that nature; that is, to punish and reward without ceasing and everywhere in order—on the one hand, to deliver from evil, and, on the other, to facilitate the acquisition of virtue; and if this great problem in the administration of moral jurisprudence, is not solved here, it is but the simple dictate of common sense to expect that it will receive attention hereafter, under probably new conditions of humanity, and under providences less complicated, or—may be, less mysterious!

CHAPTER VI.

Why is Man here at all, if he is not to exist hereafter ?

THOUGH man was a dweller upon the earth, long anterior to the hypothetical Adamic era, his introduction here is but of comparatively recent date, in the history of the world. Ages and ages—too vast to be conceived by the mind of man, and too numerous to be expressed by mortal tongue, had elapsed before the fiat of the Almighty—let there be man, went forth ! All this long, long time, man was not. Other worlds may have known him : the *stone-age* of geologists, did not yet attest or feel his presence. The world revolved well—it seems, without ‘him, and not existing, he could not desire to exist, nor deplore his nonentity as a loss to him. Evidently there must have been good reasons why God so ordered, that man should not exist during all this prodigiously extended period of time. At length the earth was created. Nevertheless, after this signal display of creative power, myriad ages.

again passed away before man finally made his appearance. Why did he appear? Why could not the present world do as well without him as the past? Perhaps it was on his *own account*, that he was called into existence, being clearly destined—as appears from his superior abilities, to hold the highest rank among the creatures of the earth, and, hence, most likely destined to signalize his presence by a life at once great and felicitous. Let us see.

Man plays, indeed, an eminently distinguished part among the various ranks of animated nature, and is, no doubt, the most admirable specimen of sublunary creation. His enjoyment here, however, whether it is viewed in a psychical or physical light, is far from being uninterrupted and complete. For he is still only a finite being, and—as such, liable to error, sin, disease, and even to grim death itself. His sufferings—arising from cares, trials, misfortunes, &c., are indisputably diverse and manifold. His career—probably in the full tide of success; buoyant with brilliant prospects; and intent on noble schemes of usefulness, is not seldom suddenly arrested by a peremptory summons to die, or, according to the Edda-myth, to meet the “wolf

of doom !” No matter what amount of wretchedness so sad and sudden a fatality may cause his bosom friend, or how much his little ones may weep over or lament his untimely fate. Sometimes, alas, he is literally a life-long invalid, and rarely sees a sunny day, or feels a thrill of joy. No period in his life, from the unborn babe, to the venerable octogenarian—an exceptional instance of longevity, exempts him from the iron grasp or stern resolve of the insatiable, unrelenting “King of Terrors.”

It is likewise true, that he is also often pleased and feels happy in the course of his brief and changeful, earthly sojourn. Indeed, if such was not the case, his life would be decidedly unbearable, and his soul—instead of now and then, soaring aloft on the wings of hope, would be doomed only to bear the burdens and taste the ills of life. In short, I think that after mature reflection upon the subject, we shall not go far wrong in saying, that the delights and aversions; the *gains* and *losses*, in human destiny, are about equal, and that man is, hence, neither exalted to angelic perfection, nor placed on the level of a possibly lower and meaner type of humanity!

It is clear from the preceding remarks, that

there exists no reason : at least not any that we can discover, for the introduction of man upon our globe ; for it is evident—as has been suggested, that the world, in all its essential particulars, could have accomplished the ends of creation quite successfully without his presence or his interference. He was certainly not needed to give completion or direction to planetary motion, nor can he—by dint of his sagacity, make the rays of the sun brighter, or the sky above him, either clearer or fairer to look upon ! The lion and the tiger would have roared or growled, nor ceased to flourish, though these fierce and puissant beasts should never have feasted on human flesh ; and the earth would have been fertile and lovely, though there should not have been any one to admire or to till it : as is proved from the condition of the earth, during some of the geological epochs *anterior* to man !

Taking the foregoing disquisition carefully into account, it is impossible, on any sound, rational principles, to believe that God would create man and place him upon the earth, merely to figure here a brief space of time, alternately enjoying and suffering, striving and quiescing, as is natural to a finite being of his nature and habits,

and then—without further clew of the reason of his origin, or the necessity and cogency of his existence, pass away for ever from the category of conscious animate existence! It is simply inconceivable that he should take so much pains to fit out a being with such varied and marvelous endowments both of a physical and mental nature, to act but a fleeting and often ignoble part in life's fitful drama, and after that—like every other material structure, becoming the prey of chemical forces, cease to exist as a human entity! Better, far better for man, never to have been born, than at last to pass away, having been but the poor, pitiable victim of a Tantalus' fate!

To elucidate the previous arguments a little further: what should we think of a parent who, knowing that the children—for whom the provision is to be made, cannot survive more than a few days, should, nevertheless, purchase a large and splendid domain for them; build a magnificent palace on it; and furnish it in a most costly and elegant manner? I answer, that his labor would be deemed useless; his expense, a waste; and his plan, a chimera! Man—it is evident, can be guilty of such glaring inconsistency; of

such vain show ; of such prodigal misapplication of means, but to God, such imprudence is impossible, and as he cannot, consequently, fall under a similar imputation of perpetrating a gross discrepancy between means and ends, it must be assumed that he designs man for a future and, therefore, higher state of existence, considered as a continuation, and advanced stage of the present life. Such a life cannot fail, it seems, when we call to mind that God is wise and good, and that we are, hence, necessarily constrained to predicate a future life as the natural sequel of the present, or else renounce all pretensions to sound logical sequence. In short, without such a destiny, man's genesis in creation is a mystery intractable to human comprehension, and an anomaly unparalleled among all known cosmic wonders !

CHAPTER VII.

If there is no Future Life, how are Mourners of the Dead to be comforted ?

EITHER the thought or sight of death, is appalling to the contemplation of the living, giving rise, in most cases, to a lively sense of insecurity, while—at the same time, it creates a mingled feeling of dismay and alarm. Such a decidedly sinister effect, produced by the presence of death, is—I conceive, neither strange nor unintelligible; for considered simply as the negation or cessation of life, it is not only extremely unlovely, but exceedingly repulsive as well as disgusting, instinctively causing the aversion instead of the attraction of the beholder. What is it that the amazed observer notices before him? A corpse, or lifeless body, passing rapidly into a state of decomposition, and developing, as it does so, a series of most offensive gases; a coffin, decked with tinsel—as if in mockery of a vain attempt to disguise an ugly fact; a grave—the

hideous receptacle of corruption, and lonely, dismal isolation from the living !*

Now amid this sad, revolting, and eminently uncongenial scene, how great, and often profound, are the mourning and sighing; how copious and bitter the tears; how heart-rending and overpowering the expressions of sympathy and regret, which are witnessed among the bereft and desolate! All these profound manifestations of grief, are perfectly natural, and cannot be the least perplexing to any one: they are mostly the genuine symbols both of a loss, which can never be replaced, and of an event, which is seldom quite relieved from the anxieties, inspired by doubt and misgivings about the future, though in the end, hope may be supposed usually to triumph in the arduous struggle. Gloomy and repellent, however, as is the death-scene, and calamitous as its ravages are keenly felt to be, it often elicits noble, praiseworthy resolves, and gives rise to displays of most disinterested and generous sympathies. It is, hence, that we find now and then, grievously afflicted and sorely distressed survivors, willing to die: to make a vica-

* A notice of *cremation*, is deferred to another time.

rious offering of themselves, if the fell doom of the dear, beloved, smitten one, could only be reversed; nay, perhaps, suspended only a little longer. Thus the aged would often not hesitate to take the place of the young; husbands and wives, to anticipate each other's fate; or the lover, to cast himself into the abyss to save the life of his betrothed, at the risk of his own!

Mourning at funerals; lamentations over the dead; the wearing of funebrial apparel; the careful and even scrupulous preservation of keepsakes; the presence of fond likenesses of the cherished dead; the erection of monuments to the memory of the departed, &c.; are all signal demonstrations of a deep sympathy, and an abiding reminiscence, both among heathens and Christians: human nature is everywhere essentially and strikingly the same! Everywhere there is death, and everywhere death brings in its sombre and lugubrious train, the same dire fatalities of hearts made desolate; of hopes disappointed; and of charming Eden-scenes converted into arid, bleak wastes. And yet, in all civilized lands—as I shall endeavor to show hereafter, mankind have believed, more or less understandingly and steadfastly, in a future life.

Why then do men mourn so bitterly at the death of their friends, near and often very dear to them, of course, if they believe—as they profess to do, in a continuous, or posthumous existence of the beloved departed? Especially is this inquiry most appropriately addressed to the Christians. Why should I; why should any one, mourn, weep, and be ineffably miserable, if no one entertains the least doubt that the dead, known so long, or—at least, loved so well, live, and are in a state vastly more conducive to happiness than the one, which they have left? Should they not rather be glad that death has, at last, relieved the sick from his suffering; made it possible for the aged to be young again; and the weary and drooping to find the long, frequently intensely coveted rest? Whence this glaring discrepancy between faith and conduct? Whence this criminal trifling with a subject at once so sacred and so replete with solemn import? I say, I hope, and betray but signs of despair! I say, I am a Christian, and fancy that I am wiser and better than the heathens, yet similar mourning and wailing distinguish the obituary rites of both!

Mourning for the dead generally; sorrow especially for friends, which a departure from

this life, is particularly apt to call forth, is at once—as we have seen, natural and absolutely irrepressible. It consequently follows that he, who can witness death's ravages: even the cold, pallid, outstretched form of his once loved and dearly cherished one, without a quivering of the lip; without a sigh, a tear, a sense of loneliness, or profound regret, must be insensible of the finer feelings, the nobler emotions of the human heart, and unworthy the name man, unless his equanimity of mind is traceable to the creed in a future life, which alone is calculated to pour the *balm of healing* in the otherwise troubled soul. Without this creed, ever energetically pointing upward and onward, what is likely to follow when death with his grim visage and sullen mien, rudely stares us in the face? Have we any succor besides? Any prospect but a rayless night? Any to-morrow? What then remains for us, if a future life fails us, or no one, beyond the bounds of time, beckons us to a home in the spirit-world? Nothing, oh sad alternative! oh evil fate! remains but the grave, decay, and the speedy resolution of the inanimate organism into its component elements! Here is ample room, it seems, for the most exhaustive sorrow; for

ceaseless tears of anguish; for pining away in the fierce grasp of blank despondency! Is it likely that God would ordain or approve, that such appalling catastrophe should overtake his poor, feeble, helpless children, looking wistfully heaven-ward for the salvation of a future life, and not rather—stretching out a father's hand, say: "All is ready, come; live, and ever grow, and be blessed in the similitude of your Creator"? Indeed, I may say, in conclusion that without the expectation of such heirship to a future life, St. Paul's maxim of life—uttered *contingently*, might be appropriately adopted by such as may still crave enjoyment: "What," writes the apostle, "advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"!

CHAPTER VIII.

The Heritable or Commemorative Immortality.

THE word, signifying immortality, has until more recent times, I believe, implied exclusively a conscious, personal existence hereafter—a period in human destiny, succeeding the termination of the present transient and uncertain life. This: among the far greater part of mankind, is its meaning still, which—even independently of this salient fact, seems to involve the only tenable and consistent idea on this important and abstruse subject. Any other interpretation of the import of the word immortality must, therefore, fall far short of the true end of such continuous and unlimited existence. For if—after death, I am no longer to be a distinct, individual human entity, I cannot conceive any other form or species of immortality, however desirable or worthy of human aspiration, it might be in some respects, that would adequately answer to my conception of the nature and end of such

a state, or measurably satisfy my posthumous wants and expectations. Minds, however, differ, and even tastes vary, as I shall presently show.

The heading of the present chapter, may strike some of my readers as odd, perhaps, as incomprehensible, considered as intended to express a phase of future life, or immortality. The sequel—it is hoped, may throw sufficient light upon the question, to make clear its meaning, and enable us duly to estimate its worth. The information of the somewhat novel and startling position, which the doctrine of immortality assumes here, is derived chiefly from an Essay, entitled “The Soul and Future Life,” by Frederic Harrison, and the comments made upon it by several distinguished English gentlemen. Both the essay and comments—it may be further stated, are contained in the second volume of “Current Discussion,” &c., edited by Edward L. Burlingame.

From the gleanings which I have been thus enabled to make, on this interesting and absorbing subject, the fact is ascertained that our author’s creed of a future life, or of the immortality of man—shared: it appears, by several

eminent men, is—strangely as it may seem, strictly confined to the present world, and consists, not in a conscious, personal existence, but—as set forth in the title of this chapter, in a *heritable* or *commemorative* immortality: an immortality, enjoyed without the individual or actual presence of the person, who is supposed to realize it: a belief, which *seems* much akin to what logicians call false reasoning, and which, therefore, Professor Huxley sarcastically designates as “An immortality by deputy”: it being intrusted to the fostering care and safe-keeping of posterity. A personal, or hypostatic immortality—in the generally accepted import of the term, I may add, Mr. Harrison: according to the learned Professor just quoted, considers as a *selfish immortality*, and of course, I presume, an immortality unworthy of a noble and generous aspiration!

Nothing is more natural—as all history attests, than that men, who are eminent for wisdom or virtue, should wish to be well-thought of, after death, by mankind in future ages; and the flattering thought that they might thus live in the memory and the lives of men hereafter, inspired them with the undaunted and laudable resolution

to lead—as much as possible, unblamable and useful lives, worthy of the approval and imitation of all true and good men, among all peoples in all time: I know nothing more becoming the efforts or the hopes of men than the love of future fame. Animated by this passion, governed by such lofty aims, and thus striving for the mastery in the race for honorable distinction, man is justly to be deemed the glory and model of his age, while—as such, he may legitimately claim for his labors and merits, a grateful and universal recognition, among all men, capable of appreciating human worth, and prompt to emulate and perpetuate it. It is thus that history immortalizes men, and that their well-deserved praises are sounded abroad among their fellow-beings. Hence, while mankind endure, there needs be no apprehension that the fame and merits of the good, the useful, the exemplary, will not live and flourish in the lives and annals of an admiring posterity: they—according to Mr. Harrison's creed, inherit precious moral and intellectual gifts from the honored dead, which will be ever held sacred; pointed to; and talked of as undying memorials, more durable than brass; more to be desired than pearls or beauty;

more ennobling and exalting than worldly power or courtly grandeur!

Of course, it may reasonably be expected that Mr. Harrison, who believes in the *extinction* of the conscious, personal entity at death, will—in conformity with his peculiar creed of a future life, strive to the utmost to bequeath something eminently excellent and praiseworthy to those, who will be finally intrusted with the proper nurture and judicious use of the precious bequest to them, of his good principles and deeds, worthy—I doubt not, of universal acceptance.

Finally, though the Harrisonian creed of immortality, is, by no means, without decided merits, considered as a factor or element signally promotive of human progress and social prosperity; yet it is one-sided, and satisfies but one phase of our need—the present, the earthly, while it entirely ignores the far higher and weightier aspiration of the soul—the aspiration to an immortal life beyond the grave! I cannot but, therefore, coincide with Professor Huxley, when he protests against the use of the phrase, employed by Mr. Harrison, “I look to a future life,” when all that is meant by it, by him and his school, is that the *influence of our sayings and*

doings will be more or less felt by a number of people after our death!

The following stanza, taken from the First Part of the "Genius" of Göthe, inculcating a creed in admirable accord with that of Mr. Harrison, *as far as* attention to future fame among mankind is the fruitful subject of his theme, will conclude the present article :

"Ein groszer Mann lebt ewig in der Welt Gedächtnisz,
Das von Geschlecht sich zu Geschlechtern reiht;
Sein Name wirkt ein heiliges Vermächtnisz,
In seinen Jüngern fort und fort erneut,
Und in so edler Nachfolg' und Gedächtnisz
Gelangt die Jugend zur Unsterblichkeit;
Zu gleichem Preise sieht sich aufgefordert,
Wem gleicher Trieb im edlen Busen lodert!"

CHAPTER IX.

If there is no Future Life, the Human Race must finally become extinct.

WHEN man dies, he ceases to exist as an entity, and his communication—considered as a conscious, personal being, with the living, is, for ever, at an end. His organism: admirably wrought, undergoes rapid and inevitable decomposition, and its component parts resolve themselves into their ultimate elements. Thus one human being after another, yields up his life and passes out of sight. Bearing in mind now that the earth—the present habitation of man, must at length: as is the fate of all other finite creations, wear out, and like its satellite—the moon, be consequently no longer adapted to the wants and end of organic life, it is clear that his situation, being no longer in accord with his destination, his prolonged existence here is, of course, rendered impossible, and he must hence gradually die out, and the race thus becoming

extinct. Such a dire catastrophe will, most undoubtedly, sooner or later, overtake him, if he is not designed for a future life: a life of a conscious, personal existence, to be realized beyond the limits of his present domicile. Doomed to the latter alternative, he would infallibly sink to a level with the lower animals, and, at best, end his once proud and hopeful career under the humiliating category of *fossil-man*, perhaps to be stared and wondered at, by some curious explorer of a world once teeming with life, and pleasant to the sight, but then presenting nothing but frightful scenes of desolation and decay! Alas, can such be the end of man?

At this stage of the investigation of the subject, claiming our attention, a closer and more definite inquiry into the term *soul*, seems to be necessary and proper, both with a view to a more intelligent understanding of it, as well as for the purpose of further elucidating the proposition and general bearing of this chapter.

The soul—as it is commonly understood, may be considered in a different light, both as to its nature and origin as well as to the end, which it is intended to accomplish. Like all other created substances, it too—it is very evident, must have

its origin in the will of the Creator: this proposition is no less plain than it is true, and needs, therefore, no argument to verify it. On the other hand, the nature and destination of the soul, demand a wider range of thought, and must, consequently, receive a somewhat more careful scrutiny.

First, the origin of the soul.—Is the soul an *emanation* from the Divine being; a ray derived from the heavenly light? The pantheist or the person, who believes that the universe is identical in import with God, unhesitatingly answers in the affirmative, and has no doubt that the soul—the *thinking substance in us*, according to Locke's definition of it, is a part of the Deity himself, though maintaining a *hypostatic* relation to him. The idea is comforting and exalting; for if the soul is an efflux out of the Godhead, it follows plainly that it cannot perish in the sense of a finite entity, subject to destructive chemical influence, but must live co-eternally with God, or—in other words, be *necessarily* immortal!

The term *pantheism* may need a little further explanation, to show that it implies, by no means, anything necessarily obnoxious, either to good sense or true piety. I shall, therefore, quote a

few sentences from Chambers's Encyclopædia, calculated to answer this purpose: "Pantheism," says the writer, "is derived from the Greek *pan*, all, and *theos*, God, and is the name given to that system of speculation which, in its spiritual form, identifies the universe with God, and therefore may be called *akosmism*, and in its more material form, God with the universe. It is only the latter kind of pantheism that is logically open to the accusation of Atheism; the former has often the expression of a profound and mystic religiosity. The antiquity of pantheism is undoubtedly great, for it is prevalent in the oldest known civilization in the world—the Hindu. Yet it is a later development of thought than Polytheism, the natural instinctive creed of primitive races," &c.

Second, the soul may be created; may, therefore, be a creature; and, hence, finite. If it is finite, unless otherwise especially ordained by the Creator, it must irrevocably share the fate of all *conditional* existence—an existence dependent on the Divine will for realization, and liable to annihilation, at least so far as conscious, personal entity is in question. Our souls may, however, be finite substances, while God may,

nevertheless, have endowed them with the principle of immortality, and if such is the case, the idea of death could not have anything repulsive or terrible in it: it would be rather a welcome messenger, a Godsend, than an evil. It would be, in fact, only a means of calling the *children* home, therefore, a blessing; nay, a thrice happy event!

Third, the soul may be *material*, and yet not necessarily of a perishable and transient nature. He that can raise matter to the dignity of a thinking being—as God undoubtedly can, can also preserve that being, and make it for ever, a living, thinking being! If God, therefore, thus wills, a soul wrought out of matter, is just as much under his control and disposal as any other finite soul, in whatever way it may have originated; for with God nothing is *impossible*,—unless it militates against his laws, which are unerringly devised, and irrevocably fixed!

Locke, the learned author of “An Essay concerning the Human Understanding,” thus states his interesting views on this momentous subject, in his discussion with the bishop of Worcester: “From thinking experienced in us,” he writes, “we have a proof of a thinking substance in us,

which in my sense is a spirit. Against this your lordship will argue, that, by what I have said of the possibility that God may, if he pleases, super-add to matter a faculty of thinking, it cannot be proved that there is a spiritual substance in us, because, upon that supposition, it is possible it may be a material substance that thinks in us. I grant it; but add, that the general idea of substance being the same everywhere, the modification of thinking, or the power of thinking, joined to it, makes it a spirit, without considering what other modification it has; as, whether it has the modification of solidity or not. As, on the other hand, a substance, that has the modification of solidity, is matter, whether it has the modification of thinking or not. And, therefore, if your lordship means by a spiritual, an immaterial substance, I grant I have not proved, nor upon my principles can it be proved—your lordship meaning, as I think you do, demonstratively proved, that there is an immaterial substance in us that thinks. Though I presume, from what I have said about this supposition of a system of matter, thinking, will prove it in the highest degree probable, that the thinking substance in us is immaterial," &c.

From a careful summing up of the foregoing arguments, it is evident that whatever may be the origin of the human soul, it is alike God's work, and that, accordingly, its immortality is entirely at the discretion of its Creator, whose wisdom and goodness are—I conceive, no more to be doubted than his existence, whence it is to be inferred that there is a strong probability, that the heavenly Father, who has called souls into being, will not allow so fair and noble a specimen of his creatorship to perish. No, God cannot thus labor in vain; cannot thus take away what is so dear to us; or for ever erase from the scroll of creation the memory of beings, gifted with minds akin to his own!

CHAPTER X.

Our Morals, considered in Relation to a Future Life.

THAT a belief in a future life must have a powerful influence in determining the nature of the present, there can be no reasonable doubt. Hence—it is self-evident, that it cannot be indifferent to me how I live or spend my time and talents, if I have good reason to think that I shall exist hereafter, and be consequently held amenable for my conduct; or—in other words, it cannot be immaterial to me how I acquit myself here, if I am sure that my rank, my influence, my happiness, in a future life, will essentially depend upon the manner in which I think and act in this: these propositions—at once plain and easily comprehensible, are founded partly upon undoubted experience, and partly upon analogy, which enables us to anticipate the future by a reference to facts and events in the past, and must, therefore, be considered to have

no small weight in the decision of the present important question.

It is evident then, that our morals, and the belief or want of belief, in a future life, are intimately connected or correlated, and that, accordingly—in a great measure at least, the principal part of mankind may be supposed to be good or bad, and thus to live wisely or foolishly, in proportion as it believes or denies a future existence. People are not all yet Stoics, and, hence, their moral principles are not satisfied by simply submitting to the dictates of a fancied *categorical imperative*, claiming peremptory and implicit obedience to its behest, without inquiring into the reason or motive of such arbitrary and despotic proceeding; for to do or not to do a thing without any rational inducement for our conduct, is—to say the least, eminently absurd as well as destructive of all true morality. Virtue, however great or disinterested it may be, must be blind and utterly reckless, not to study the probable results to which it will lead, and to be governed accordingly. If I am to do thus or so—as an intelligent, moral agent, I must: I repeat, know the reason, otherwise there can be no motive of action, and to act without a

sufficient motive, is to act not as a sensible or reasonable being, but as an automaton, which is clearly outside of the sphere of the moral categories.*

What has been already said of the likelihood that there will be a future life, because the ameliorative ends of man of the present, seem to be but imperfectly or only partially attained, holds good especially in respect to the demands and complete recognition of the moral law, which cannot be satisfied here—as the experience of mankind indubitably testifies, either in its per-

* Those philosophers, who postulate an innate moral sense, can—it seems, have no difficulty of anticipating the exact forms which human conduct will: under any given circumstances, assume; for—granted that they are correct in their views, the life of man will be, of course, the necessary result or evolution of such a pre-psychical arrangement. I regret that I cannot indorse this seemingly very convenient theory; for a striking diversity of moral conduct, observable among mankind, according to difference of age, culture, vocation, &c., clearly shows that there is no such moral sense, or pre-ordained infallible guide of life. On the contrary, the history of the human race shows most conclusively, that what is called the moral sense, is simply a constitutional susceptibility or capacity of the moral development of the soul; and that, hence, the moral sense is the gradual result of human experience, and, therefore, actually based upon *induction*.

sonal or social influence upon the interests of our race. Time is too short; opportunities often limited or fleeting; and men's capacity for free-agency, still too inexperienced, too imperfectly informed, to do it full justice and thus allow it ample sway. This admirable capacity is clearly only in an incipient stage of growth and efficiency: a plant just set out, and watered, and hedged in a little, but not grown, not matured! It affords me much pleasure, therefore, to be able in the elucidation of this important subject, to refer for approval and sympathy to the opinion of so famous a philosopher as Kant, who entertained the undoubted conviction that the destination of mankind to an immortal life, is the absolute condition of an ever-increasing approximation to the requirements and full benefits of the moral law!

On the other hand, it is possible that a species of morality may be practiced—as far as form or semblance is concerned, from sheer selfishness, and the individual and society be still very much benefited by it. Immorality or vice is justly deemed disgraceful in the judgment of the better part of mankind, and—to escape so unpleasant an estimation of their character, people soon

perceive that it will be to their advantage, to assume at least the guise and air of virtue; contention is exceedingly disagreeable, causing painful as well as malignant feelings, and it is, hence, natural that amicable and kind relations should be cultivated to avoid so unhappy a result; crime, being a violation of law and the social weal, it is met, for the sake both of self-protection and the determent of the evil-doer, with due and often speedy punishment: "I will rather conform to the institutions of society," says he, "than suffer ignominy," though he may be totally regardless of the moral sentiment; idleness entails want and suffering, and the idle is, of course, often in very great distress, when he cannot but learn to appreciate the inestimable advantages, which may be derived from a careful and persistent practice of the twin-blessings of industry and economy; finally—to give but one more instance in point, the connubial relation having been rendered extremely wretched and distasteful, in consequence of the infidelity of one of the parties, self-interest—ever dominant among the unprincipled, soon dictates an opposite and more prudent behavior.

Not any motives or reasons of conduct, how-

ever well they may be calculated to alleviate suffering; to prevent disorder and crime; to foster the interests of virtue or science, &c., are really laudable and, hence, to be unqualifiedly approved, unless they emanate from strictly moral principles, whose aim is solely to do right; to be invariably truthful; to be diligent in giving succor to those that are in distress; to further with equal care the public weal and the rights of the individuals, &c. To do only what we conscientiously consider just and proper, and what is at once useful and honorable among men, as well as approved by God, must be ever our most sacred duty, and should be our chief and most exquisite delight. Shams can never benefit man, and must ever be an unmitigated abomination in the sight of God!

A point of too much importance to be passed over in silence in this place, is the idea of a barely possible future life, implying simply *potentiality*, and, therefore, deciding nothing positively either affirmatively or negatively on the subject. In such a case, common sense teaches us to make the best of our circumstances, and to live as blamelessly and as usefully as possible. In short, to do the right and shun the wrong, as far

as reason and our relations in life, will make plain our duty and consistent our conduct with the moral sense. Our motto must ever be, be *conscientious*; learn, by all means, to know and to do the will of your Maker; live as wisely and as ethically well as is in your power: *this* is our duty. As to the rest, buried in the thick, impenetrable gloom of futurity, we leave that to God, assured that the infinitely good and wise Ruler of the universe, will always act wisely and well, amen!

I will only add in conclusion, the following opportune and appropriate couplet from Young's "Night Thoughts":

"Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly—angels could no more."

CHAPTER XI.

Is it a Proper Function of Reason to inquire into the Probabilities of a Future Life?

THE question, forming the heading of the present chapter, Is it a proper function of reason to inquire into the probability of a future life, I, of course, unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative; for there cannot exist any mode or kind of thought within the capacity of human reason, which does not constitute a legitimate subject of reflection or inquiry, as will be evident when we consider, that if God gives us a power, he will also—as a necessary concomitant, give us the means to use it: the mere bestowal of it, already implies attainment as its end. No subject, therefore, which reason can contemplate, apprehend, or subject to logical method, is too sacred or too exalted for its inquiries; and the more assiduously we use it to enlarge the sphere either of our knowledge or of our usefulness, the more we shall honor it and be blessed by it.

The idea, which tacitly underlies the preceding paragraph, is, that the subject of the immortality of the soul—involving an existence in an unknown and unknowable world, altogether transcends human comprehension, and should, consequently, be carefully excluded among the themes of our inquiries. The subject, indeed, vastly surpasses our powers of comprehension, but not our powers of *apprehension*: we can think of it, reflect upon it, reason about it, and compare the evidence for and against it, though our arguments in behoof of a correct decision of it, will necessarily lack the exactness and certainty of demonstration. If the child—it may be remarked, was not allowed to use its reason on incomprehensible subjects, it would always, of course, remain a child, and its precious talent *reason* would thus be not only wasted through negligence or oversight, but the adorable Giver of it, treated with marked insult and ingratitude.

It is a great pity that reason is so seldom or so shyly employed within the sphere of the important religious elements of human life. I can hardly see how it could be put to better or more honorable use. As is the case now, there is, indeed, religion enough in the world, but much of

it is, alas, of a very inferior and base quality, because it lacks the comeliness and efficiency, which reason only can confer upon it. Since the introduction of Christianity into the world—a period embracing nearly two thousand years, a great part of mankind might have grown much wiser and much better, as well as worshiped God more worthily and more usefully, if it had exercised its reason more and its fancy less. Instead, however, of pursuing so sensible and profitable a course of conduct in so eminently weighty a matter, Christians have been too generally content with a bastard creed instead of a genuine faith, thus careless or unconscious of their highest interests, they at length find themselves where they have long lain in pitiful and contemptible supineness—at the feet of an *often* incompetent or unfaithful hierarchy. Such is one of the sad consequences of the sinful neglect or the wicked calumny of this greatest of the gifts of God to man—reason!

The following thoughts of Byron re-echo while they give eclat to the foregoing:

“’Tis a base

Abandonment of reason to resign

Our right of thought.”—*Childe Harold*.

Any efforts which reason may put forth on the subject of a future life, being deemed futile, the defect: it is supposed, may be remedied only by resorting to a direct Divine, or supernatural revelation, which alone can satisfy our inquiries, or solve our doubts about a future life. To which, it may be replied, that if such is the case, the Jews must have had very little inquisitiveness about a hereafter, or this momentous subject was most strangely and unaccountably overlooked when the revelation of the Pentateuch was made to them, for the books, comprised under that title, give not the slightest information about a future life; and it is, accordingly, a fact, patent to every reader of that significant portion of the Old-Testament scriptures, that all the rewards and punishments, mentioned in the judicial code of the "Chosen People," are—without a single exception, confined to the present life: a life to come, instead of being made the subject of a special miraculous communication, is there totally ignored!

In the Gospel, the doctrine of a future life, is everywhere clearly taught; indirectly inferred; or tacitly premised, and the remarkable reticence on the subject, observed in the Pentateuch, can

—by no means, be charged against it, yet what is very singular is, that the doctrine on this important subject, entertained among the heathens, is substantially the same—as every one, familiar with the history of the peoples bearing that collective appellation, will readily perceive, though they make no pretensions—at least not, it may be presumed on orthodoxly sound principles, to a supernatural or miraculous revelation! A fact, well worthy to be a little more closely investigated, which I shall, accordingly, endeavor to do in the next paragraph.

That the heathen nations generally, unless they are still struggling on the lower plains of human development, believe emphatically in a life to come, is proof that the idea of a future life, is the natural outgrowth of the human mind, and is necessary both to satisfy an instinctive want of the soul, as well as to supplement the *hiatuses*, or defects and imperfections, incident to the administration of the present life. What is, moreover, of very great weight here and, therefore, commends itself prominently to our serious attention, is the fact that the heathens, who are thus animated with the glorious hope of a future life, and, consequently, com-

forted and cheered, not only amid the crosses and hardships of life, but in the dark, ominous hour of death, are the children of God as well as we; that God is *their* no less than our father; and that—delightful thought! in him, they too, accordingly, “live, and move, and have their being,” being as much his *offspring* as any other members of the human family. Governed by reflections similar to these, and evidently irritated at the conceit of the Jews, that they alone were *pre-eminently* God’s people, St. Paul justly indignant at their ridiculous pride and unsocial, bigoted temper, exclaims: “Is he not also the God of the gentiles?” and, answering his own interrogation, stoutly replies: “yes, of the gentiles also.”

From salient facts and arguments, like the foregoing, I infer that it is about time that Christian zealots should cease their base slanders of the heathens, as if they were so many wretched outcasts, forsaken by God, and, therefore, justly abhorrent to man! Let me venture the remark, reader, that the heathens—notwithstanding the disparagement of their character in the Jewish scriptures, have always been in a course of Divine training, and that we are not

the only people who take lessons at God's footstool; that—though the heathens sin and do amiss: as is inevitable in human progress, and as we all can testify from experience; yet they are heirs of a life to come as well as we: belief being the guarantee. God, who has made such faith possible among them; who has educated them to it, will—I doubt not, see that they will realize it under brighter prospects and happier auspices than the present life, however elysian it may be, now and then, can afford!

CHAPTER XII.

The Belief in Ghosts or Apparitions being Universal, seems to warrant the Inference of a Future Life.

THE belief in ghosts or apparitions, clearly implies the belief in the immortality of the soul, and that the soul, being thus indestructible, or continuing to exist as a hypostasis, can make itself visible as well as otherwise perceptible to the living. The ghost is called a spook, if it habitually frequents certain places, which—in ghost-nomenclature, are then said to be *haunted*. A marked peculiarity in ghost-character, is the circumstance that apparitions take place only in the night, or in the deep gloom unvisited and unwarmed by the solar rays. Whether this striking fact is owing to the extreme transparency of the substance or *idola*, in which they are clothed, or to a shyness too sensitive to face the light, I am—of course, unable to state. This point may however be laid down as quite certain, that the communication which the spirits of the

departed keep up with this world, has a reserved, even a clandestine air, and scrupulously shuns publicity: the ways and doings of a ghost are, therefore, decidedly mysterious, and it will be long before a Lange or a Henry, for example, will have discovered a canon in exegesis, that will fully unravel and satisfactorily explain all the strange idiosyncrasies of these subtile, aerial denizens!

The localities especially sacred or best adapted to the haunts of the ghosts, are dilapidated old buildings; lonely woods—the habitats of owls, screeching or hooting in dismal notes; profound abysses—dimly visible, or ominously re-echoing; the forbidding sights of capital punishment; the dread scenes where murder has been committed; the spot where stolen treasures are hidden, and the guilty ghost must hover till restitution has been made; and—in an eminent degree, the sacred realm consecrated to the repose of the dead: the grave-yard. This is the choice haunt of all the earth where ghosts dwell most numerous, or display their presence most frequently. It is here, among the moss-grown tomb-stones, or, screened amid the rank, obtrusive weeds and bushes, that they delight to

roam, now passing like a flash through space, then slowly and in measured step, seemingly scanning the faded epitaphs inscribed to the memories of the dead: always clad in white shroud-like drapery, the sight of which fills the credulous beholder with a shudder, and warns him not to venture too near the charmed and mystic ground.

Ghosts have other and less ominous missions, which claim a concise notice in this place: they give tokens, for instance, by their presence and manner, to the living—particularly to their relatives, acquaintances, &c., intended to apprise them of the time, appointed for their dissolution, or to warn them of some impending calamity. Thus the grief-stricken survivors often see their departed dear ones, looking pleasantly—if they are happy, sadly, of course, if they are unhappy. The mother—dressed neatly: as was her wont in the flesh, her gray hair still visible, and betokening age, comes at mid-night, stands for a moment at the bed-side of her child, points upwards, and vanishes; the baby too, sweet and pretty as ever, once in awhile returns, and the bereft mother knows that her darling still lives! Sometimes also, an unfeeling daughter or a

brutal son: with awakening conscience, sees the upbraiding countenance of a neglected or ill-treated father, sadly, sternly, scowling rebuke. Tiding is likewise brought, implying how delightful a place heaven is, and the idea is, consequently, intended to be excited, intently to long and diligently to strive after it, &c.

After mature deliberation on the subject in question, it seems that the belief in ghosts, as objects of human vision; as visitors among mortals; as messengers of good or ill to their surviving friends, &c., is nothing but a delusion, and an outgrowth of a vulgar or a diseased mind. Philosophers—unless their minds should happen to be morbidly affected, are decided unbelievers in the visible presence or actions of ghosts. On the other hand, ghosts are the natural and necessary offspring of vulgar minds, which are notoriously always prone to superstition, and, therefore, the facile victims of idle fancies, and sickly hallucinations. Besides, it is not easy to perceive or realize why the souls of the dead should thus be allowed or constrained to roam over the earth, and, at best, accomplish so little good, while they often fill the minds of the living only with serious alarm, or distract them with fell dis-

may. It cannot be, I conceive, that the soul, destined to survive the dissolution of its mortal tenement, should be continued to exist in a state at once so trivial, base, and insignificant. The great being, bearing the august name God, cannot—because it would be in flat contradiction to his known wisdom and goodness, ordain so dire and seemingly unreasonable a fate for the future state of the soul!

However visionary and absurd the ghost-faith is, its wide and general prevalence among mankind, irrespective of race or creed, is proof that *the thinking substance in us*—the soul, is believed to be immortal; for a dead soul cannot haunt; cannot give presentiments; or assume the human form and manifest consciousness. Whoever, therefore, is certain that he sees or has seen a ghost, is also so far certain that the soul lives after death, and that—of course, he too is immortal. Thus a false belief—not false as far—we hope, as the immortality of the soul is postulated, but false as far as it is based on presumed ghost-phenomena, has proved a welcome and seasonable means of consolation to the sick; the troubled; the dying, &c. Because the soul, according to this dogma, appearing under the

guise and in the manner of a ghost, it cannot fail to elicit faith in our existence hereafter, which, again, can result only in a serene and happy state of mind.

In his "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft," &c., Sir Walter Scott writes: "The general, or, it may be termed, the universal belief of the inhabitants of the earth, in the existence of spirits separated from the encumbrance and incapacities of the body, is grounded on the consciousness of the divinity that speaks in our bosom, and demonstrates to all men, except the few who are hardened to the celestial voice,* that there is within us a portion of the divine substance, which is not subject to the law of death and dissolution, but which, when the body is no longer fit for its abode, shall seek its own place, as a sentinel dismissed from his post.—The conviction that such an indestructible essence exists, the belief expressed by the poet in a different sense, *Non omnis moriar*, must infer the existence of many millions of spirits, who have not been annihilated, though they

* I doubt not there may be honest doubters, who are *not* "hardened to the celestial voice."—G.

have become invisible to mortals, who still see, hear, and perceive only by means of the imperfect organs of humanity.—The abstract idea of a spirit certainly implies, that it has neither substance, form, shape, voice, or anything which can render its presence visible or sensible to human faculties. But the sceptic doubts of philosophers on the possibility of the appearance of such separated spirits, do not arise till a certain degree of information has dawned upon a country, and even then only reach a very small proportion of reflecting and better-informed members of society. To the multitude, the indubitable fact, that so many millions of spirits exist around and even among us, seems sufficient to support the belief that they are, in certain instances at least, by some means or other, able to communicate with the world of humanity. The more numerous part of mankind cannot form in their mind the idea of the spirit of the deceased existing, without possessing or having the power to assume the appearance, which their acquaintance bore during his life, and do not push their researches beyond this point,” &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Immortality of the Soul, as taught among the Heathens.

PARAGRAPH I.

The Immortality of the Soul, as taught in the Brahminism of the
Hindoos.

THE Brahminical religious system of the Hindoos, resolves itself briefly into the following readily intelligible propositions: There is one only Supreme Being, who—in the unrevealed majesty of his godhead, is denominated Parabrahma, Brehm, Paratma, &c. In the course of self-contemplation, Parabrahma created the world, and thus first manifested himself as Brahma Birma, or the creator; next, he appeared in the character of Siva or Mahadeva, the destroyer of the world; and, lastly, he claims recognition under the two-fold title of restorer and preserver of all things. Notwithstanding the assumption of the tritheistic form, Parabrahma is ever one in abso-

lute unity, though in his cosmic evolutions he appears under innumerable parts, which may be properly considered, therefore, as merely illustrating the *shekīnah* or glory of his august presence. For his essence is irrepresentable as it is ineffable. He is the everlasting and only *really* self-existing entity. The universe is his symbol, and is simply expressive of his name. Embracing everything within himself—as the unconditional reality, he is subject neither to the influence of time nor space, but is emphatically unchangeable—the soul of the world; the soul of every individual entity. At length, the destiny of creation being finally consummated, it will be *reabsorbed* into the *pleroma* or fullness of Parabrahma!

In further illustration of this interesting but somewhat abstruse subject, I shall avail myself of a couple of extracts from Professor Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe." Both the Institutes of Menu—a code of civil and religious laws, written about the ninth century before Christ, and the Vedas,* "Are"—writes this

* The technical of those ancient Sanscrit books, on which is based the religious belief of the Hindoos, in the earlier

distinguished author, "pantheistic, for both regard the universe as the manifestation of the Creator; both accept the doctrine of Emanation, teaching that the universe lasts only for a definite period of time, and then, the Divine energy being withdrawn, absorption of everything, even of the created gods, takes place, and thus, in great cycles of prodigious duration, many such successive emanations and absorptions of universes occur."

With especial reference to the position, which the soul occupies in the pantheistic creed, the Professor again thus remarks: "As to the relation between the Supreme Being and man, the soul is a portion or particle of that all-pervading principle, the Universal Intellect or Soul of the World, detached for awhile from its primitive source, and placed in connection to the bodily frame, but destined by an inevitable necessity sooner or later to be restored and rejoined—as inevitably as that rivers run back to be lost in the ocean from which they arose. "That Spirit," says Varuna to his son, "from which all

stages of their religious development. The *Rigveda*, I may add, is considered the oldest literary production in the world.

created beings proceed, in which, having proceeded, they live, toward which they tend, and in which they are at last absorbed, that Spirit study to know: it is the Great One.””

It is evident from the foregoing arguments, that the believer in pantheism, must be likewise a believer in the immortality of his soul; for—under the circumstances, such a belief is absolutely a *foregone conclusion*: the part—considered as an emanation, is inherent in the whole; and the fraction is an integrant of the unit. Hence, if God is everlasting, the soul too is illimitable in its duration. Is it not at once, in fact, god of God, and god in God? Thus we see, Brahminism to be synonymous with pantheism, and pantheism with the great, paramount dogma of the immortality of the soul!

PARAGRAPH II.

The Belief in the Immortality of the Soul among the Ancient Persians.

Among other dogmas, embraced under the phrase *eschatology*, the ancient Persians taught that after death, the soul will exist temporarily in an intermediate state, appropriated to its condition, according as it is good or bad.

As soon as a person has died, the Dews—it is affirmed, hasten to seize the departed soul, and in this sinister attempt, they readily succeed, if its character is bad, but if, on the contrary, it has a reputation for justice and purity, the Izeds benignly interpose their presence, and rescue the intended victim from their fiendish grasp.

The soul—after the temporary suspension of its ultimate destiny, now arrives at the great bridge Tschinevad, the boundary line between the present and the future world. Here awaits it the dread judge of all men and all deeds—Ormuzd, the god of light and goodness, accompanied by Bahman, and, in compliance with his decision, the good soul is carried by the holy Izeds, across the bridge into the Land of Bliss, where it lives in anticipation of a happy resurrection. The bad souls—on the contrary, are not suffered to pass the bridge, but are doomed to go to a place which is more in accord with their evil conduct.

At last when the time—allowed by Zeruane Akerene, the Supreme Being, for the termination of the arduous contest with Ahriman, or Satan: the mischievous author of all evil in the world, has expired, the resurrection begins, and

both the good and the bad will equally participate in it: all the dead having been re-collected for that solemn purpose. Every one will arise in the order in which he had entered upon the present scene of life. After that, the good and the bad will occupy separate abodes, suited to their moral worth or demerit, and, consequently, psychical condition. Ahriman will now be cast into an abyss of darkness, where—in liquid fire, he will undergo a process of expurgation from evil. Not only shall man be renewed both in body and in soul, but all creation shall share in the ultimate renovation. Before this happy consummation, therefore, the earth will so profoundly sympathize with the approaching catastrophe, as to seem smitten with a most dire disease; hills and mountains will dissolve in living streams of fire, through which the souls of mortals must pass, to be thoroughly purified and cleansed from all blemishes and base desires, and thus fitted for the final enjoyment of everlasting life!

All nature is now restored to its pristine vigor and beauty; hell is no more; Ahriman's kingdom is destroyed, and Ormuzd alone reigns and disseminates blessings everywhere. At

last, Ormuzd with his seven Amshaspands, and Ahriman with his seven Dews, bring a joint-sacrifice to Zeruane Akerene,* or the Supreme Being, and the grand and awful drama is closed !

Very valuable information, respecting the belief in the immortality of the soul among the ancient Persians, is communicated by a contributor to Chambers's Encyclopædia, to a part of it, especially pertinent to the present scope of the question, the reader's attention is respectfully invited. Treating of a life to come, he continues : "The belief in immortality, was one of the principal dogmas of Zoroaster,† and it is held by many that it was through Persian influence that it became a Jewish and a Christian dogma. Heaven is called the 'House of Hymns,' a place where angels praise God incessantly in song. It is also called the 'Best Life,' or Para-

* The meaning of Zeruane Akerene—the Supreme Being of the Persians, means *time without bounds*, that is the Eternal.

† Zoroaster—the prophet, was the restorer and reformer of the Magian sect. According to some, he lived about 550 years before Christ, while others assign a considerably earlier date as the period of his activity.—G.

dise. 'Hell' is called the House of Destruction. It is the abode chiefly of the priests of the bad—*deva*, religion. The modern Persians call the former Behesht; the latter, Duzak. Between heaven and hell, there is the bridge of the gatherer or Judge, over which the soul of the pious passes unharmed, while the wicked is precipitated from it into hell. The resurrection of the body is clearly and emphatically indicated in the Zend-Avesta; and it belongs, in all probability, to Zoroaster's original doctrine—not, as has been held by some, to later times, when it was imparted into his religion by other religions. A detailed description of the resurrection and last judgment is contained in the Bundeshesh. The same argument—the almightiness of the Creator, which is now employed to show the possibility of the elements, dissolved and scattered as they may be, being all brought back again, and made once more to form the body to which they once belonged, is made use of there to prove the Resurrection. There is still an important element to be noticed—the Messiah, or Sosiosh, from whom the Jewish and Christian notions of a Messiah are held, by many, to have been derived. He is to awaken the dead bodies, to re-

store all life destroyed by death, and to hold the last judgment," &c.

PARAGRAPH III.

The Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, as taught among the Ancient Egyptians.

In this paragraph, I shall attempt to give a concise statement of the belief of the ancient Egyptians in the immortality of the soul, as far as it can be gathered from their practice of embalming the dead, and the dogma of the transmigration of the soul: facts, which leave not a shadow of doubt upon the impartial mind, that the primeval dwellers in the valley of the Nile, were firm believers in a hereafter.

*The Embalming of the Dead.**—As soon as an Egyptian was dead, a member of his family or a friend, gave information of the event to the priest, whose duty it was to officiate on the occasion. Accompanied by those whose profession—as well as his own, required them to act an important part in the solemn funereal rite, he proceeded to an edifice, especially appropriated for

* The example given above, pertains to a mummy of one of the higher classes of citizens.

such a purpose, and presented three models or paradigms of mummies—of various excellence and different prices, to the embalmers, who selected one, which best comported with the rank and means of the deceased. As soon as this was done, the priest, on whom devolved the important office of dissecting the body, hastened to begin his task, but as soon as he had made the first incision, he fled precipitately, pursued by the relatives of the dead person simulating anger and threatening to stone him, on account of the outrage, which they pretended that he had committed: signifying that the deceased's body was the work of God, and that he was, therefore, ostensibly guilty of the crime of sacrilege.

Dissection having been completed; the viscera—carefully incased, committed to the waters of the Nile; and the body laid in alkaline solutions, one of the embalmers—always a priest, facing the sun, thus offered up a prayer in the name of the dead: “O thou ruler, Helios, and all the gods, who have given life to man, receive me into your celestial abode; for while I sojourned upon the earth, I have always honored the gods, the benign authors of my existence, and never embezzled another's goods,” &c.

After the expiration of seventy days, the body of the deceased was taken out of its alkaline bath, and having been embalmed with proper care and skill; accurately as well as neatly swathed; and laid in a richly decorated coffin of sycamore-wood, the mummy was finally placed in an upright position against the wall, in one of the *necropolies*, or cities of the dead, where—consecrated to the Supreme Being, it awaited the opening of the great cosmic year!*

The transmigration of the Soul.—According to Herodotus, the Egyptians were the first among mankind, who have taught the immortality of the soul. “They believe,” he writes: in the language of Beloe, one of his numerous translators, “that on the dissolution of the body, the soul immediately enters some other animal, and that after using as vehicles every species of terrestrial, aquatic, and winged creature, it finally enters a second time into a human body. They

* “The art of embalming,” writes a contributor to Chambers’s Encyclopædia, “seems to have derived its origin from the idea, that the preservation of the body was necessary for the return of the soul to the human form, after it had completed its cycle of existence of three or ten thousand years,” &c.

affirm that it undergoes all these changes in the space of three thousand years," &c.

Creuzer in his "Symbolik und Mythologie der Alten Völker," &c., expresses the opinion—which seems exceedingly plausible, that the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, is the *vulgar* form of the belief in the immortality of the soul; that the priests and educated part of the Egyptians, taught a purer and more rational kind of immortality, independent of any connection with the present frail and corruptible body; while the common people—generally extremely rude and ignorant, could not think of the soul as a hypostasis, except in conjunction with a body. Hence the origin of mummyism or the practice of embalming the dead, that the soul might still continue to inhabit its pristine abode.

However long the artistically and carefully prepared mummy-habitation might serve the soul as a home after death, it must eventually decay and be dissolved into its constituent elements, when transmigration into other bodies, was inevitable. At this stage, however, of this remarkable creed, a source of hope and joy suddenly opened before the hapless wanderer—in the blessed institution of *Amenthes*—a region in

the nether world, synonymous with *Hades*, and devoted to repentance and amelioration. Dying, the soul descended into the realm of the mild and gracious Osiris, through whose wise and assiduous teaching, it was purified and exalted. From this very agreeable turn, which the subject has assumed—in this brief investigation, it appears that the soul, united with its earthly tenement, is capable to live in Amenthes, and be comparatively happy there, if it will only implicitly conform to the parental authority of Osiris, the Good God!

The following brief exposition of the subject, by a writer in the *Encyclopædia* already mentioned, in another part of this Paper, being at once elucidative as well as corroborative of the preceding remarks, will appropriately conclude the present disquisition: “The Egyptians,” he says, “believed in the transmigration of souls, and all not sufficiently pure to be admitted into the courts of the sun, or whose bodies had perished before the expiration of 3000 years,* passed from body to body, having first descended to

* The period during which the mummy or embalmed body was supposed to last.—G.

Hades, and passed through the appointed trials and regions, endeavoring to reach the manifestation of the abode of light," &c.

PARAGRAPH IV.

The Belief of the Ancient Greeks in the Immortality of the Soul.

Retributive justice among the ancient Greeks.
—Rewards and punishments were universally taught by the poets and believed by the people of ancient Greece. There was, hence, a kingdom of Pluto—located in Hades, or the *lower regions*, where justice was administered without respect of person to the departed souls, in strict accordance with the desert of each: Hence, the bad were banished to *Tartarus*, while the good were received into *Elysium*. "The Fates will tell you," writes Tooke, in his "Pantheon of the Heathen Gods, and Illustrious Heroes," "that Pluto presides over life and death; that he not only governs the departed spirits below, but also can lengthen or shorten the lives of men on earth, as he thinks fit."

Pythagoras.—Pythagoras—who flourished in the sixth century before the Christian era, was the celebrated founder of the *Italic School of Phi-*

losophy. Among other mysterious lore, which he was taught by the Egyptian priests, when he temporarily sojourned among them on a visit to their country, was the famous doctrine of the metempsychosis or transmigration of the soul, which a numerous and zealous disciple-ship afterwards widely disseminated among the Hellenic and Latin races of peoples.—“There is no doubt,” says an English writer, “that Pythagoras maintained the doctrine of the transmigration of souls into the bodies of men and other animals: which seems to have been regarded in the Pythagorean system as a process of *purification*, and he is said to have asserted that he had a distinct recollection of having himself previously passed through *other stages* of existence,” &c.

Plato, the “Divine Philosopher.”—Plato believed in a former existence of the human race, and asserted that sometimes he was keenly sensible—like Pythagoras, of reminiscent glimpses of the past. In the Work, entitled *Phædrus*, he gives his views on the momentous subject of the soul’s immortality. Referring to them, in his “Lectures on the History of Ancient Philosophy,” Butler writes: “Plato here argues, that the soul—as self-moving, is a Principle of mo-

tion; that a principle cannot be produced any more than it can be destroyed. Not produced, for it would then no longer be a principle, no longer the self-dependent source of its own energy; not destroyed, for if so the whole existence of things, which rests on first principles of production, might cease. "If then," he concludes, "all which is the source of its own motion, is soul, assuredly the soul can have neither commencement nor termination."—I will only add, that in *Timæus*, this distinguished Greek sage teaches that both the souls of mankind and those of the lower animals, are of the same nature with the *universal soul*, and, consequently, alike immortal!

The Dionysus-mysteries teach the immortality of the soul.—According to the psychological views, taught in the profound mysteries sacred to this divinity, the human soul is originally an inmate of heaven, or the celestial world, but has forsaken this happy abode, in its lust for individual or separate existence. Owing to this unhallowed propensity, it drank from the cup of *Liber Pater*, or Bacchus, thus becoming intoxicated with sensuous desire, when material love rapidly developed itself, and the memory of its high descent, grew gradually more and more

faint. Being now in a marked degree oblivious of the past, it longs to be born in the flesh. Such is generally the case in this process of mental deterioration. The better or more considerate class of souls, however, fleeing the temptation to such extreme degradation, steadfastly keep in mind the blissful habitation which they have left, that they may more effectually shun the pernicious influences of this world. These souls, being thus wisely upon their guard, drink only so much from the fatal cup of oblivion—*le'the*, as—under the circumstances, is unavoidable. The consequence is, they still sympathize with better natures and strive after a nobler destiny. Hence too it happens, that as soon as they arrive here, they attach themselves closely to the genius or *daimon*, that is assigned to each of them, to guide them back again to pristine bliss and glory. On the contrary, the more sensuous souls drink more copiously of the noxious draught; become constantly more oblivious of their first estate; and—finally, preferring evil to good, they thenceforth, alas, pay little attention to their divine monitors!

The belief in immortality is inculcated in the Eleusinian Mysteries.—"Several months," writes Gil-

lies, in his interesting and valuable "History of Ancient Greece," &c., "had passed in these preparations,* when the Eleusinian festival approached; a time destined to commemorate and to diffuse the temporal and spiritual gifts of the goddess Ceres, originally bestowed on the Athenians, and by them communicated to the rest of Greece. Corn, wine, and oil, were the principal productions of Attica; each of which had been introduced into that country through the propitious intervention of a divinity, whose name was distinguished by appropriate honors. Minerva, who had given not only the olive, but what was regarded as far more valuable, her peculiar protection to the city of Athens, was rewarded with innumerable solemnities. Various also were the professions of gratitude expressed, in stated days of the spring and autumn, to the generous author of the vine. The festival of Ceres returned, indeed, less frequently; but was, partly on that account, the more solemn and awful; and partly, because distinguished by the Eleusinian mysteries, those hidden treasures of wisdom and hap-

* The military and naval arrangements for the prosecution of a new campaign.—G.

piness, which were poured out on the initiated in the temple of Eleusis.

Fourteen centuries before the Christian era, the goddess, it is said, communicated those invaluable rites to Eumolpus and Keryx, two virtuous men, who had received her in the form of an unknown traveler with pious hospitality. Their descendants, the Eumolpidæ and Keryces, continued the ministers and guardians of this memorable institution, which was finally abolished by the great Theodosius,* after it had lasted eighteen hundred years. The candidates for initiation were prepared by watching, abstinence, sacrifice, and prayer; and before revealing to them the divine secrets, the most awful silence was enjoined them. Yet enough transpired among the profane vulgar to enable us still to collect, from impartial and authentic testimony, that the mysteries of Ceres expressed by significant emblems, the immortality of the human soul, and the rewards prepared in a future life, for the virtuous servants of heaven. The secrecy enjoined by her ministers, so un-

* The cause of the abolition of the Eleusinian mysteries, was simply a contemptible piece of bigotry.—G. .

worthy the truth which they taught, might justify the indifference of Socrates, whose doctrines, not less divine, were inculcated with unreserved freedom. But the fate of Socrates may justify, in its turn, the circumspection of the hierophants of Ceres."

PARAGRAPH V.

The Immortality of the Soul, as it was taught in the Obsequies of the
Ancient Romans.

In treating the present question, Kennett—the learned author of "*Romæ Antiquæ Notitia*; or the Antiquities of Rome," will be the sole authority; and though brief: parts only—deemed most suitable, being culled from the text, his information will be fully adequate to the proper understanding and just appreciation of the important subject.

The funeral ceremonies—of the ancient Romans, may be divided into such as were used to persons when they were dying, and to such as were afterwards performed to the dead corpse.

When all hopes of life were now given over, and the soul being apparently just ready to take its flight, the friends and nearest relations of the dying party were wont to kiss him, and embrace

his body till he expired. Thus Suetonius relates that Augustus expired in the kisses of Livia. Nor needs there be any further proof of a custom, with which everybody is acquainted. The reason of it is not so well known : most probably they thought by this pious act, to receive into their own bodies the soul of their departing friend. For the ancients believed that the soul, when it was about leaving the body, made use of the mouth for its passage ; whence *animam in primo ore*, or *in primis labris tenere*, is to be at death's door. And they might well imagine the soul was thus transfused in the last act of life, who could fancy that it was communicated in an ordinary kiss, as we find they did from the lovers, recited by Macrobius.

The custom of closing the eyes of a departing friend, common both to Romans and Grecians, is known by any one that has but looked into a classic author. Pliny tells us that, as they closed the eyes of the dying persons, so they likewise opened them again when the body was laid on the funeral pile : and his reason for both customs is, “ *ut neque ab homine supremum spectari fas sit, et cœlo non ostendi nefas* ” ; because they counted it equally impious that the eyes should

be seen by men at their last moment, or that they should not be exposed to the view of heaven.

After the funeral, we are to take notice of the several rites performed in honor of the dead, at the festivals instituted with that design. The chief time of paying these offices was the *Feralia*, or the feast of the ghosts, in the month of February; but it was customary for particular families to have proper seasons of discharging this duty, as the *Novennalia*, the *Decennalia*, and the like. The ceremonies themselves may be reduced to these three heads—sacrifices, feasts, and games; to which, if we subjoin the customs of mourning, and of the consecration, we shall take in all that remains on this subject.

The sacrifices—which they called *Inferiæ*,* consisted of liquors, victims, and garlands. The liquors were water, wine, milk, blood, and liquid balsam. The blood was taken from the victims offered to the *Manes*, which were usually of the smaller cattle, though in ancient times it was customary to use captives or slaves in this inhuman manner. Beside the balsams and garlands used on these sad occasions, they also were

* Sacrifices or offerings in honor of the dead.—G.

in the habit of strewing loose flowers about the monuments of the dear departed ones.

The feasts celebrated to the honor of the deceased, were either private or public. The private feasts were termed *Silicernia*, from *silex*, and *cæna*, as if we should say—suppers made on a stone. These were prepared both for the dead and the living. The repast designed for the dead, consisting commonly of beans, lettuces, bread, and eggs, or the like, was laid on the tomb for the ghosts to come out and eat, as they fancied they would; and what was left they burned on the stone.*

The private feasts for the living were kept at the tomb of the deceased, by the nearest friends and relations only. As to the public feasts, they took place when the heirs or friends of some rich or great person obliged the people with a general treat to his honor and memory; as Cicero reports of the funeral of Scipio Africanus, and Dio of that of Sylla. Suetonius also relates that Julius Cæsar gave the people a feast in memory of his daughter. Such marked demonstration of affection and veneration for the dead, is suffi-

* The tombstone.—G.

cient proof—I may remark, that conscious personal existence was ascribed to them !

The last ceremony, designed to be spoken of, was consecration. This belonged properly to the emperors ; yet we meet too with a private consecration, which we may observe in our way. This was, when the friends and relations of the deceased canonized him, and paid him worship in private : a species of respect commonly paid to parents by their children, as Plutarch observes in his “ Roman Questions ” ; yet the parents too sometimes conferred the same honor on their deceased children, as Cicero promises to do for his daughter Tullia, at the end of his “ Consolation ” ; and though that piece—as we now have it, is suspected of not being genuine ; yet the present authority loses nothing of its force, being cited heretofore by Lactantius, according to the copies extant in his time. .

PARAGRAPH VI.

The Ancient Scandinavians too believed in the Immortality of the Soul.

In presenting this somewhat novel and striking phase of the great doctrine in a life hereafter, I shall do little more than perform the servile task

of a copyist, simply aiming—as such, in the main carefully to follow in the path so clearly marked out by M. Mallet, in his eminently interesting and instructive Work, recognized and admired under the title “Northern Antiquities,” &c.

Here too, on bleak, gelid Scandinavian soil, and in the hearts of the Scandinavian people, we find again the consoling and sublime dogma of the immortality of the soul, to have flourished while it illustrated the temper and directed the hopes of the sturdy and belligerent worshipers of Odin. It was a doctrine naturally growing out of the pious and profound conviction of those northern Teutons—ever thirsting for fame and victory, that there is a divinity within us: an imperishable principle, that is destined to survive the dissolution of the body, and to be happy or miserable, according to our fidelity to duty, and uprightness of conduct, here below. All the Teutonic nations held essentially the same exalted opinions, and it was upon these that they founded the twin obligation of serving the gods, and of being valiant in battle.

Scandinavian mythology expressly distinguishes two different abodes for the happy, and as many for the culpable; which is what several authors

who have written of the ancient religions of Europe, have not sufficiently attended to. The first of these abodes was the palace of Odin, named *Valhalla*, where that god received all such as died in a violent manner, from the beginning to the end of the world, that is, to the time of that universal desolation of nature, which was to be followed by a new creation, and what they called *Ragnarök*, or the twilight of the gods. The second, which—after the renovation of all things, was to be their eternal abode, was named *Gimli*; that is, the palace covered with gold, where the just were to enjoy delights for ever.

It was the same as to the place of punishments; they distinguished two of those, of which the first, named *Niflheim*, was only to continue to the renovation of the world, and the second that succeeded it was to endure for ever. This last was named *Naströnd*, the shore of the dead; and we have seen in the description of the end of the world, what idea was entertained of it by the ancient Scandinavians.

With regard to the two first places, the *Valhalla* and *Niflheim*, they are not only distinguished from the others in being only to endure till the conflagration of the world, but also in

respect to rewards and punishments. Those only whose blood had been shed in battle, might aspire to the pleasures which Odin prepared for them in Valhalla. The pleasures which they expected after death, show us plainly enough what they relished during life. "The heroes," says the Edda, "who are received into the palace of Odin, have every day the pleasure of arming themselves, of passing in review, of ranging themselves in order of battle, and of cutting one another in pieces; but as soon as the hour of repast approaches, they return on horseback all safe and sound back to the hall of Odin, and fall to eating and drinking. Though the number of them cannot be counted, the flesh of the boar Sæhrimnir is sufficient for them all. Every day it is served up at table, and every day it is renewed again entire: their beverage is ale and mead; one single goat, whose milk is excellent mead, furnishes enough of that liquor to intoxicate all the heroes. Odin alone drinks wine for his entire liquor. A crowd of virgins wait upon the heroes at table, and fill their cups as fast as they empty them." Such was that happy state, the bare hope of which rendered all the inhabitants of the north of Europe intrepid, and which

made them not only to defy, but even seek with ardor, the most cruel deaths!

I shall bring this brief inquiry to a close, by calling the reader's attention to the following pertinent and decidedly elating stanza, taken from Young's celebrated "Night Thoughts":

" 'Tis immortality—'tis that alone
Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill;
That only, and that amply this performs."

PARAGRAPH VII.

The Belief in the Immortality of the Soul, among the Indians or Aborigines of America.

Though ignorant, compared with the English colonists among them, the Indians were both smart and ingenious, "Nor," writes Grimshaw in his "History of the United States," &c., "were they destitute of religion. Unaided by the blessings of revelation, they had, by the mere dictates of natural reason, received a system, which was, in a great measure, adequate to the prevention of injustice. They believed, that there were many gods; who were of various degrees, and possessed peculiar attributes: but that there was one God above the whole, by whom

the others, and the universe, were made; that the soul was immortal; and that there was, in a future state, a place of reward for the virtuous, and punishment for the wicked," &c.

"There are two fundamental doctrines," says Doctor Robertson, in his elegant and charming "*History of America*," "upon which the whole system of religion, as far it can be discovered by the light of nature, is established. The one respects the being of a God, the other the immortality of the soul. To discover the ideas of the uncultivated nations under our review with regard to those important points, is not only an object of curiosity, but may afford instruction," &c.

With respect to the great doctrine concerning the immortality of the soul, this distinguished writer thus expatiates: "The human mind, even when least improved and invigorated by culture, shrinks from the thoughts of annihilation, and looks forward with hope and expectation to a state of future existence. This sentiment, resulting from a secret consciousness of its own dignity, and forming an instinctive longing after immortality, is universal, and may be deemed natural. Upon it are founded the most exalted

hopes of man in his highest state of improvement; nor has nature withheld from him this soothing consolation, in the most early and rude period of his progress.

We can trace this opinion from one extremity of America to the other: in some regions more faint and obscure, in others more perfectly developed, but nowhere unknown. The most uncivilized of its savage tribes do not apprehend death as the extinction of being. All entertain hopes of a future and more happy state, where they shall be for ever exempt from the calamities which embitter human life in its present condition. This future state they conceived to be a delightful country, blessed with perpetual spring, whose forests abound with game, whose rivers swarm with fish, where famine is never felt, and uninterrupted plenty shall be enjoyed without labor or toil. But as men, in forming their first imperfect ideas concerning the invisible world, suppose that there they shall continue to feel the same desires, and to be engaged in the same occupations, as in the present world, they naturally ascribe eminence and distinction, in that state, to the same qualities and talents which are here the object of their esteem. The

Americans, accordingly, allotted the highest place, in their country of spirits, to the skillful hunter, the adventurous and successful warrior, and to such as had tortured the greatest number of captives, and devoured their flesh.

These notions were so prevalent, that they gave rise to a universal custom, which is, at once, the strongest evidence that the Americans believe in a future state, and the best illustration of what they expect there. As they imagine that departed spirits begin their career anew in the world whither they are gone, that their friends may not enter upon it defenceless and unprovided, they bury together with the bodies of the dead their bows, their arrows, and other weapons used in hunting or war; they deposit in their tombs the skins or stuffs of which they make garments, Indian corn, manioc, venison, domestic utensils, and whatever is reckoned among the necessities in their simple mode of life.

In some provinces, upon the decease of a cazique or chief, a certain number of his wives, of his favorites, and of his slaves, were put to death, and interred together with him, that he might appear with the same dignity in his future station, and be waited upon by the same attend-

ants. This persuasion is so deep-rooted, that many of the deceased person's retainers offer themselves as voluntary victims, and court the privilege of accompanying their departed master, as a high distinction. It has been found difficult, on some occasions, to set bounds to this enthusiasm of affection and duty, and to reduce the train of a favorite leader to such a number as the tribe could afford to spare."*

While—in his "Indian Traits," &c., Thatcher mainly accords in his information with that to which we have just listened on the subject of Indian ideas of the soul's immortality, he imparts to it very interesting additional light, and will, therefore, appropriately find a place in these researches: "A belief in the immortality of the soul," he says, "is common to all the tribes, while they differ much in their opinions as to its situation after death. Some suppose it to remain for a time in this world, invisible, but capable of seeing and hearing its old acquaintances, and even of assisting them in moments of distress.

* At the death of Huana-Capac, the most powerful of the Peruvian monarchs, *above a thousand victims* were doomed to accompany him to the tomb.—G.

But sooner or later it must travel a long journey to the far-off *land of spirits*—in the South-west. This requires several months to perform, and is attended with numerous difficulties, such as crossing rapid streams upon a single log, and meeting with ferocious dogs or wild beasts. Meanwhile, the spirit, being supposed still to feel the appetites belonging to it during life, must be supplied with proper conveniences for traveling and subsistence, at least until it has had time to acquire different habits. Hence, food, weapons for hunting, a pipe, a tinder-box and flint, and other similar articles, are placed in the grave alongside of the corpse.

The Indians all believe, also, in a future state of rewards and punishments, although they differ respecting the mode, and also in regard to what general character and course of conduct will either condemn a man on the one hand, or entitle him to the favor of the Great Spirit on the other.

To be a good hunter and a great warrior, and especially to have killed a great number of the enemy in war, are esteemed strong recommendations to future happiness. The virtues of hospitality, of charity, of fortitude, are also consid-

ered; and in fine, whatever, according to their notions, goes to make up a meritorious character. Even the beasts will have their part of paradise; for the Indian believes that the whole race of animals will survive the present life, and that he will have not only an abundance of excellent game, of every description, but hunting-grounds and fishing-privileges in the future world. Thus the hunter will be able to enjoy himself constantly in his favorite amusement, while an eternal spring will freshen the pathway under his feet with flowers, and fill the woods around him with melody and verdure.

Those who are punished, it is believed, are only punished for a time, and then admitted into the company of the good.* Some tribes suppose the punishment to consist in one thing, and some in another. Perhaps, for example, in crossing a stream upon a log, the bad spirit will slip off, and be condemned to remain in the water up to his chin, within sight of the happiness of the good, but without the power of partaking of it.

Some of those tribes living furthest North,

* What a contrast with a Calvinist's hell!—G.

imagine this place of punishment to be a cold and desolate country, without game, where there is but a bare possibility of sustaining life in the midst of perpetual snows. Such, for instance, is the belief of the Mandans, as represented by an accurate observer—Catlin, the distinguished artist, who has spent considerable time among them during the last season.”

To the foregoing graphic and faithful delineations of a creed, strikingly characteristic of an interesting and once numerous race of people,* I add the following naïve and pathetic effusion from Pope’s immortal production—the “Essay on Man,” equally, yet concisely, portraying the profound yearning of the soul after a life to come :

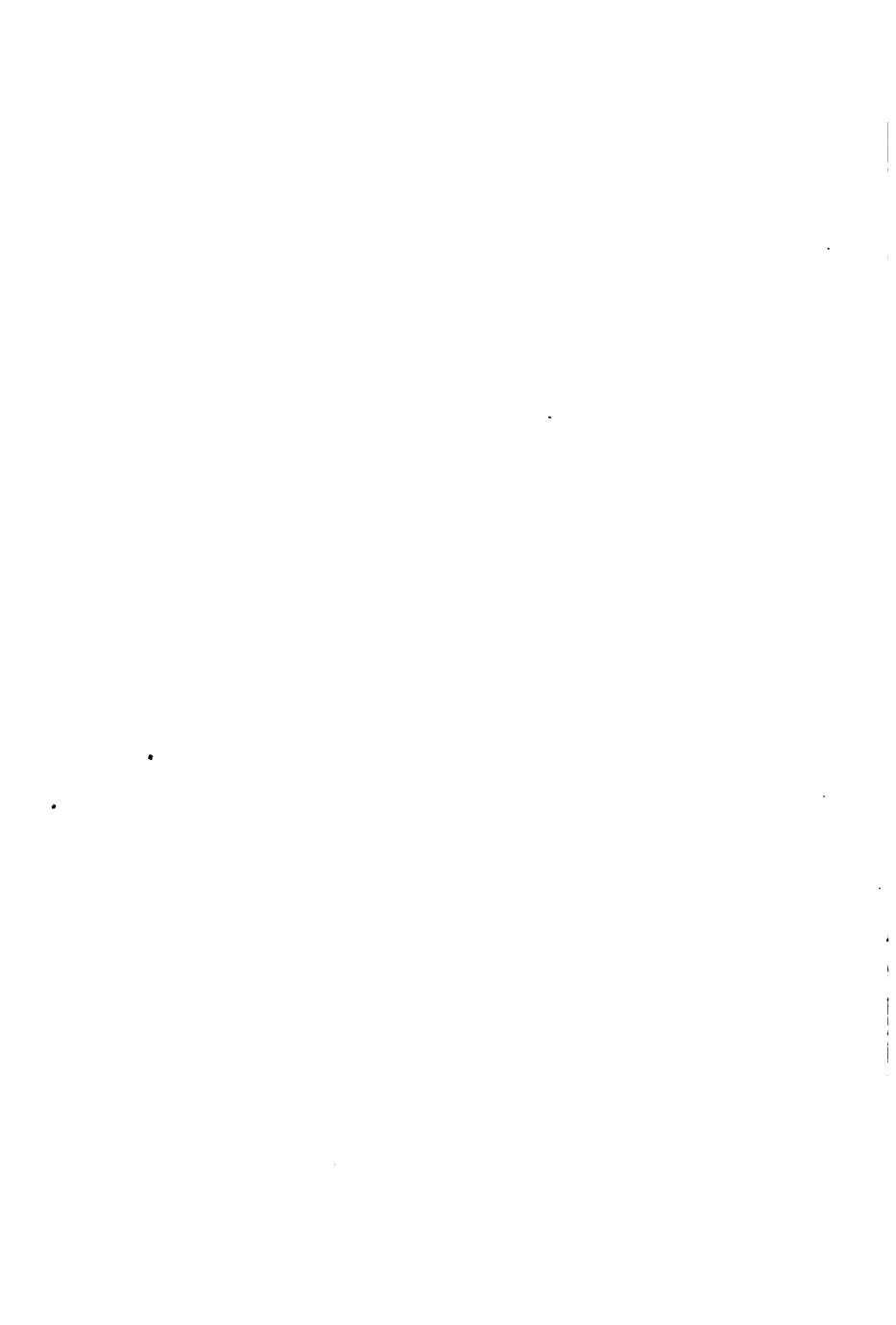
“Lo ! the poor Indian, whose untutor’d mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind ;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way ;
Yet simple nature to his hope has giv’n,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav’n,
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac’d,
Some happier island in the wat’ry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold !

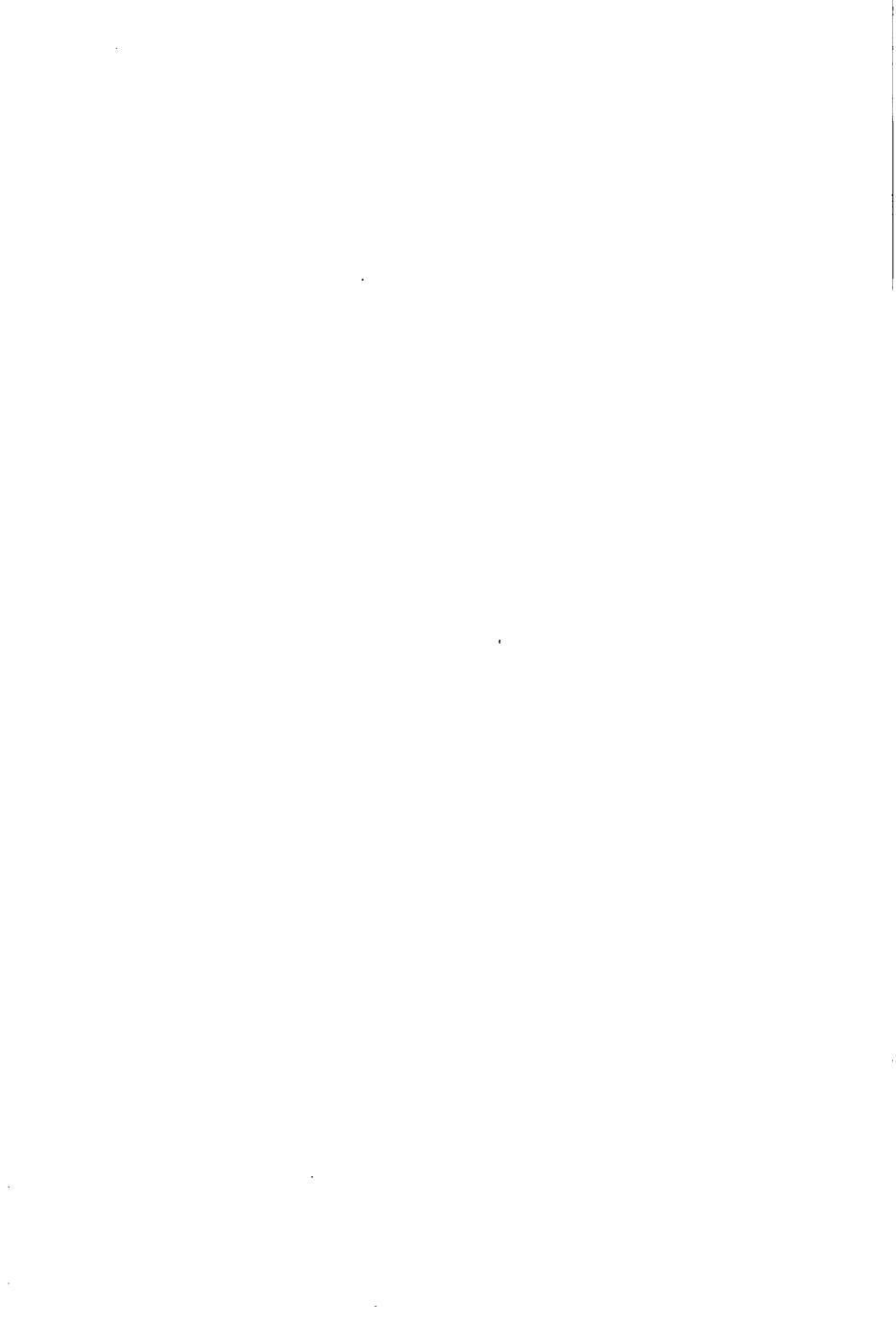
* Perhaps it would be more proper to say *races of peoples*.

*To be, contents his natural desire,
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire ;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company."*

Though much might still be said in favor of the important subject, to which the preceding disquisition has been devoted; yet enough evidence—I think, has been adduced, to satisfy any intelligent and impartial mind, that the belief in a life to come is universal among mankind, and, hence, plainly a gift of God: this being a fact, it must, undoubtedly, be the will of God, that we should assiduously and unfalteringly cherish faith in a future life, and that, consequently, it is his will also that we should not be the victims of a terrible delusion, but the absolutely predestined heirs of a blessing, the craving after which, he has deeply and ineradicably impressed in the souls of his children!

THE END.











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